

**THE ROLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS'
ADAPTATION TO SASKATOON: A CASE STUDY OF THE ST. THOMAS
MORE AFRICAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY MASS**

By: Kitavi Rosemary Mwikali

A Thesis submitted to the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in the Department of
Linguistics and Religious Studies

University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

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Canada

S7N 5A5

OR

Dean

College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

University of Saskatchewan

107 Administration Place

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada

S7N 5A2

Abstract

My research is a case study of the St. Thomas More African Catholic Community Mass that meets at St. Thomas More College, a Catholic liberal arts college federated with the University of Saskatchewan. The main purpose of my research is to investigate the role the Catholic Church plays in the adaptation of African Catholic newcomers to Saskatoon. I chose the STM African Mass as a case study because I was interested to know the following: 1) whether African newcomers' perceptions about religion have changed after moving to Canada, 2) whether the availability of culturally appropriate worship opportunities in the Catholic Church has facilitated their adaptation to Canadian society, and if so, to what degree; 3) whether they have the same commitment to their religion after moving to Saskatoon. The study also investigates the challenges to integration faced by African Catholics in Canadian society: the culture shock experienced by newcomers, e.g., weather issues; difficulties balancing church attendance and work; problems of native Canadians understanding African accents; discrimination and racism; and unemployment and under-employment for the sake of survival, among other challenges. The 20 participants I interviewed felt that much more should be done by the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Saskatoon and the African Catholic Mass to help them deal with these challenges. Some members felt that STM Mass has helped them in different ways, such as the sense of togetherness, the flavour of how it is at home (the preaching, the singing), the sense of belonging, and the experience of joy. But the main challenges still remain for individuals to deal with personally.

The study has presented in depth the core themes that emerged from the interviews, such as culture shock, the assertion that Africans are notoriously religious (African religiosity), and the Roman Catholic theology of inculturation, which have functioned as frameworks for the study.

In the interview findings, the members said that religion is very important to them and in their lives. Their religiosity was demonstrated by their frequent attendance at weekday and Sunday masses, participation in church activities both in Africa and in Saskatoon, and the creation of STM African Community Mass to solve some of their challenges, and meet their spiritual and emotional demands.

This study proposes some ways of addressing some of these challenges. The findings of the study also provide insight to Catholic Churches in Canada that will help them be more responsive to the needs of African newcomers and thus facilitate their easier transition and integration into Canadian society.

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A debt of gratitude goes to all the participants in this study, the members of STM African Catholic community Mass, for their generous contribution of ideas and perspectives for the study.

To all blessings.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all the members of the STM African Catholic Community Mass. May God continue to strengthen you as you worship in the beauty of African ways.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 The Setting

The number of Africans living in Saskatoon is currently growing very fast. In 2001, the number of Africans living in Saskatchewan was 1415.¹ In contrast, in 2011 the number of Africans who came to live in the city of Saskatoon was 1080² (there are, unfortunately, no more recent data about African newcomers in Saskatoon). There are several reasons why the number is growing. Wisdom Tetty and Kobla Pupilampu note that “the increasing flow of immigrants into Canada from countries in Africa ... was a result of changes in Canada’s immigration policies.”³ These policies introduced the points system.⁴ In addition, the Immigration Act of 1978 established three categories under which migrants could be admitted into Canada: the family class, the refugee class, and a composite class involving independent applicants, entrepreneurs, and assisted relatives.”⁵ Another, more proximate, reason is that the city of Saskatoon published the “Immigration Action Plan Gap Analysis Report” in 2008. One of the goals of the Gap Analysis was to determine an action plan for the attraction, integration, and retention of immigrants to Saskatoon.⁶ In interviews conducted for this study, participants agreed that the reasons why they came to Saskatoon included joining relatives living here, seeking better job opportunities, and having been offered refugee status by the federal government. However, many Africans (350-500 per year) who come to Saskatoon are students due to the presence of the University of Saskatchewan.⁷ Sixty percent of the people who participated in this study were students, some of which had been granted scholarships by the University of Saskatchewan.

¹ Maha Kumaran, “Diverse Populations in Saskatchewan: The Challenges of Reaching Them,” *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research* 5, no.1 (January 1, 2010): 9.

² Statistics Canada, “Population-Saskatoon CMHC,” accessed October 15, 2016, https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/buho/seca/sa/sa_001.cfm.

³ Wisdom J. Tetty and Kobla P. Pupilampu, ed., *The African Diaspora in Canada: Negotiating Identity and Belonging* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 113.

⁴ Points system means “The immigration regulations introduced in 1967 established new standards for evaluating potential immigrants. To enhance the objectivity of admissions procedures, a system was set up in which independent immigrants were assessed points in specific categories relating to their education, occupational skills, employment prospects, age, proficiency in English and French and personal character. Individuals receiving 50 points or more out of a possible 100 were granted entry, regardless of their race, ethnicity or national origin.” See Lindsay Van Dyk, “Canadian Immigration Acts and Legislation,” accessed February 16, 2017, [www.pier21.ca > Home > Research](http://www.pier21.ca/Home/Research).

⁵ Tetty and Pupilampu, *African Diaspora in Canada*, 113.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ According to a conversation with a staff member of International Student Centre (at the Help Desk office of the University of Saskatchewan). However, there is no official document for that statistic.

This thesis is a case study of the St. Thomas More African Catholic Community Mass that meets at St. Thomas More College, a Catholic liberal arts college federated with the University of Saskatchewan. The main purpose of my research is to investigate the role the Catholic Church plays in the adaptation of African Catholic newcomers to Saskatoon.

The study also investigates the challenges to integration faced by African Catholics into Canadian society, such as the culture shock experienced by newcomers, weather issues, difficulties balancing church attendance and work, problems of native Canadians understanding African accents, discrimination and racism, and unemployment and under-employment for the sake of survival. The participants felt that the African Catholic Mass could do much more to help newcomers deal with these challenges. Its relatively few members felt that STM Mass has helped them in small but significant ways such providing a sense of togetherness, reminding them of home (the preaching, the singing), helping them feel as if they belong, and giving them the experience of joy. But individuals must still deal with the main challenges on their own. This study proposes some ways of addressing some of these challenges. Secondly, the findings of the study offers insight to all Catholic churches in Canada on how to involve African newcomers and make their transition and integration to Canadian society easier.

1.2 Thesis Questions

For many people, religion is crucial in human development, physically, emotionally, socially, psychologically and economically. James Patrick argues that religion matters hugely in how many people live their lives from birth to death and is relevant because it is such a basic dimension of human life, encompassing culture, tradition, language, worldview, and the fundamental necessity of the spiritual realm.⁸ Religious values formed in childhood encourage participation in religious organizations later in life.

I am a Catholic nun who has taught Christian Religious Education in public high schools (Catholic-sponsored schools) in Kenya for six and a half years. Christian Religious Education in Kenya is a compulsory subject from primary school to high school. In Form Two (high school) it becomes optional. It is also compulsory in other church-based high school and tertiary institutions, especially the Catholic-sponsored public and private schools. Most of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa are primarily Christian, with dense Catholic populations. John Mbiti has

⁸ Patrick James, ed., *Religion, Identity, and Global Governance: Ideas, Evidence, and Practice* (Toronto: University Press, 2011), 28.

famously called Africans “notoriously religious,”⁹ meaning that religious beliefs and practices are wholly ingrained into Africans’ way of life. I am interested to know, through this research, whether African newcomers have shifted their position on religion after moving to Canada, and the extent to which the availability of culturally appropriate worship opportunities in the Catholic Church has facilitated their adaptation to Canadian society.

According to Statistics Canada, Saskatoon is one of the fastest growing cities in the country. The estimated population of Saskatoon on July 1, 2015, was 304,975, an increase of 20% from the previous year. One of the main drivers of growth in Saskatoon was international migration. Saskatoon welcomes people from over 180 countries from different continents of the world.¹⁰ As noted above, some 1080 African immigrants came to Saskatoon in 2011. The Catholic population of Saskatoon in 2011 was 71,485.¹¹

In 2001, the total number of African immigrants in Canada was 282,600, while between 2006 and 2011 about 145,700 immigrants arrived from Africa, 12.5% of the newcomers who arrived during that period.¹² Canada’s population was estimated at 35,985,800 on October 1, 2015.¹³ According to Statistics Canada in 2011, the total population of Canadians was 33,476,688.¹⁴ Two-thirds of Canadians identified themselves as Christians (22,102,745 in 2011). Of this number, about 12,728,900 were Roman Catholic, the largest Christian group.¹⁵ African newcomers who come to Canada become part of the larger society, but they bring their religious affiliations and practices with them. In 2001, the largest religious groups among the African community in Canada were Protestant (30%) and Catholic (23%)¹⁶ (unfortunately, there are no

⁹ John Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophy* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), 1.

¹⁰ David Gile, “Saskatoon Population Youngest in Canada,” accessed July 24, 2016, <https://www.globalnews.ca/news/saskatoonpopulation>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Statistics Canada, “The African Community in Canada,” accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89621.2001>

“Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada,” accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/199-010x2011001>, 2011.

¹³ Statistics Canada, “Canada Nationals,” accessed February 25, 2016, www.statcan.gc.ca/daily.

The main reason for using 2011 data on religion is that there are no current statistical data on the religion in Canada in 2015, and this is because information about religion is only collected once every 10 years.

¹⁴ Statistics Canada, “The Canadian Population in 2011: Population Counts and Growth, 2011,” accessed on February 7, 2016, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/...>population> and dwelling counts.

¹⁵ Statistics Canada, “Religion in Canada 2011,” accessed November 19, 2015, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/eng/bb/info/religion>.

¹⁶ Statistics Canada, “The African community in Canada,” www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89621.2001

There are no recent statistics for African immigrants concerning the religion and the most recent figures are for 2001 as indicated. The information provided about religion is for immigrants in general for 2011 statistics.

more recent census data concerning the religion of African immigrants). My research will focus on the role the Roman Catholic Church plays in the transition process of African immigrants into Canadian society, looking specifically at the African Catholic Community at St. Thomas More College, Saskatoon.

Several scholars (e.g., John Arthur, Cecilia Conrad et al., Fil Fraser, John Frazier et al., Wisdom Tetty and Korbia Puplampu, Patrick Manning, Mojubaolu Okome and Olufemi Vaughan)¹⁷ have done various studies focusing on people of African descent with regard to their contribution to the economy in western countries, their employment rates, income inequality, educational attainment, occupational inequality, home ownership, identity, and the history of their immigration. While it is likely that religion has helped many immigrants to settle in their new homes in most western countries, there is scarce research on the role religion plays in African immigrants' adaptability to Canada and other western nations. To partially address this gap, this research attempts to explore the distinctive role the Catholic Church plays in African immigrants' adaptation to Saskatoon through a case study of a specific community.

1.2.1 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of my research is to investigate the role the Catholic Church plays in the adaptation of African Catholic newcomers to Saskatoon. Secondly the study will investigate the challenges to integration faced by African Catholics, and how African newcomers address these challenges. The study will determine the extent to which African newcomers are actively involved in religious activities, especially in view of the assertion that Africans are "notoriously religious." Also, the findings from the study will give insight to the Catholic Church as to how to involve African newcomers in ways that will enhance their integration to Canadian society. Finally, this study will enable policymakers and community organizations to better serve the needs of recent Catholic African newcomers as they settle, adapt and integrate into Canadian society in Saskatoon and elsewhere.

¹⁷ John Arthur, *African Diaspora Identities: Negotiating Culture in Transnational Migration* (Lanham: Rowman Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 13; Cecilia Conrad, John Whitehead, Patrick Mason, and James Stewart, eds., *African Americans in the U.S. Economy* (Lanham: Rowman Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 14; Fil Fraser, *How the Blacks Created Canada* (Edmonton: Dragon Hill Publications, 2009), 192; John Frazier, Joe Barden and Norah Henry, eds., *The African Diaspora in the U.S.A and Canada at the Dawn of the 21st Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 33; Tetty and Puplampu, *The African Diaspora in Canada*, 159-160; Patrick Manning, *The African Through Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 1; Mojubaolu Okome and Olufemi Vaughan, *West African Migrations: Transnational and Global Pathways in a New Century* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 15.

1.2.2 Significance of the Study

My research will be of significance in different contexts. First and foremost, this research fills a small but significant gap in the literature regarding the role of the Catholic Church in the transition of African newcomers to Canadian society, a topic upon which little research has been done. The findings will be useful to the Catholic Church and other religious communities because it will point out the challenges African newcomers face, make suggestions regarding the solutions to these challenges, and determine what kinds of religious and related activities are particularly helpful to African Catholic newcomers. The findings will be significant to local African Catholics who might want to know the history of the STM African Community Mass and the possible benefits of participation in such a community. Based on the results and conclusions of the study, I will also recommend areas of research for future consideration.

1.2.3 Research Questions

1. What role does the Roman Catholic Church play in the transition of African immigrants into Canadian society?
2. How important is the religion among African immigrants to Canada and to what extent does the availability of culturally appropriate worship opportunities facilitate their adaptation to Canadian society?
3. What are some of the challenges African Catholic immigrants face as they adapt to worship in Canada and their transition in Canadian society?
4. What are some of the suggestions the African immigrants can give to address the challenges faced?

1.2.4 Definition of Key Terms

The phrase “African newcomers” refers to African people who have their descent from sub-Saharan African countries like Nigeria, Cameroon, Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Sudan, among others. African newcomers include immigrants, refugees, international students, and temporary skilled workers who are currently living in Canada. In the case of the STM African Mass, international students predominate (60% of the participants were students), but other classes of newcomers also participated.

Adaptation refers to the process of adjusting to change in a new environment.

In his definition, Will Deming refers to the term **religion** as the orientation to ultimate reality. This is because every religion promotes a vision of a reality that is infinitely more

important than anything else, referred to as sacred or holy, and employs symbols which religious people engage to reach higher realities.¹⁸ Similarly, Emile Durkheim notes that religion does not exist in a vacuum but is always a “social act.” Religion appears in daily interactions since it arises through the constant interpretations, positions taken, decisions, perceptions, and gestures by which, as actors in society and in its groups and organizations, persons interact, form opinions, interests, and make needs understandable among people.¹⁹

1.3 The Scope of the Study

The study involved the members of St. Thomas More African Catholic Community Mass. Nineteen participants were interviewed face-to-face; in the case of one participant, the interview was done by telephone, for a total of 20 interviewees.

1.4 Delimitation and Assumptions of the Study

One delimitation of this study is that it focuses only on African newcomers who attend the STM African Mass, but not on a broader population sample of African newcomers. This is because of my unique access to the STM community, and to its suitability for a case study project. The participants included adults but not children or teenagers, since the people who started the African Mass initially targeted university students who are 18 or older. The literature review is limited to research on African diaspora populations, and especially the role of religion in their adaptation to new environments. Still, the study focuses mostly on qualitative, ethnographic, interview-based research. The conceptual frameworks used in the study include culture shock, African religiosity, and inculturation, which are themes that arose repeatedly among the interview participants.

The assumption of the study is that the participants answered the interview questions truthfully and accurately, based on their personal experience and opinions, and that they responded to the best of their abilities.

1.5 Methodological Considerations

The research study employed an ethnographic qualitative approach. According to Mason, qualitative research aims to produce rounded understandings on the basis of rich, contextual, and detailed data.²⁰ This approach helped me to gain a deeper understanding and collect quality data concerning African newcomers’ perceptions as to whether they have shifted their position on

¹⁸ Will Deming, *Rethinking Religion: A Concise Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 14-16.

¹⁹ Kocku Stuckrad, ed., *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 1614.

²⁰ Jennifer Mason, *Qualitative Researching* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 4.

religion after moving to Canada, and the extent to which the availability of culturally appropriate worship opportunities in the Catholic Church has facilitated their adaptation to Canadian society.

The sampling procedure followed was a snowball method, which is a technique for gathering research subjects through the identification of initial subjects who are used to provide the names of other participants. The researcher identified the initial/key informants who were six members of the STM African Catholic community. This was done on a Sunday after the STM African Mass. The researcher approached the members in confidence, and after negotiation and agreement, the key informants were provided with the participant invitation letter, and were asked to assist the researcher in identifying other participants for the study (see Appendix 1). The key informants were free to give the invitation letters to those members of the African Catholic community who were willing and ready to participate; the onus was on the invitees to contact the researcher. The researcher assured the participants that they were free to set the date, time, and place where the interview would take place, depending on where the interviewee was most comfortable.

I conducted 20 interviews with members of the STM African Catholic community to get detailed insights from the individual participants. Interviews were guided by a questionnaire (see Appendix 2), which contained open-ended questions that enabled participants to share their views, stories and experiences concerning their adaptation to life in Saskatoon, and the role of the STM African Mass in the adaptation process. I used semi-structured interviews which posed several key questions that helped to define the areas to be explored and that allowed the interviewer or interviewee to pursue an idea or response in more detail. Mason cites Burgess's term "conversation with a purpose."²¹ This is because, in semi-structured interviews, both the interviewer and interviewee can add questions for clarification.

As noted above, the interviews were done in-person, except one which I conducted by telephone. One-on-one interviews were important because it helped me to get first-hand information. The participants were able to share their own ideas, views, explanations, and some touching experiences, without fear. One interview was done by telephone because the participant had moved from Saskatchewan to another province.

I was able to meet with the participants in various locations, depending on their availability, time, and flexibility. Some interviews were done at the interviewees' houses, some

²¹ Ibid., 62.

in their home parishes, some at the parks, but most of them were done in STM College, either in my supervisor's office or in one of the classrooms allocated by the College office for that purpose.

The interviews on average took from 45 to 70 minutes, depending on the particular participant. Participants were encouraged to elaborate on their answers and add any comments that they felt were not adequately covered by the questionnaire. All the interviews were digitally recorded with permission by the participants in the Consent Form (see Appendix 3). During the process of data transcription, I presented participants' views or ideas in their own words without alteration. In addition, the participants were given a chance to review the completed transcripts of their personal interviews and had an opportunity to add, alter, and delete information from the transcript as appropriate; hence, they acknowledged that the transcript accurately reflects what they said in their personal interviews with me. They thereby authorized the release of the transcript to me to be used as agreed in the Transcript Form (Appendix 4), and I was able to use the revised transcripts from the participants. Further, an agreement to destroy the original transcribed data after a period of five years was made between me and the participants. The participants were kept anonymous for the sake of confidentiality. Where necessary, I translated the questions into the Swahili language, especially for French speaking participants, to make the questions clear for them.

The participants were from the following eight countries within Sub-Saharan Africa: Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, and Congo. The participants were in total: six Nigerians, five Ghanaians, three Kenyans, two South Sudanese, one Congolese, one Rwandan, one Ugandan, and one Cameroonian. There was rough gender balance, with nine female and eleven male participants (see Table 2). Most participants were delighted at the opportunity to participate in the interview and requested a copy of the completed thesis, which I promised to do by email after the academic requirements are met.

Participants' Demographic Data

Table 1. Interviewees according to number of years in Canada and Saskatoon at time of interview

Name of Participants (pseudonyms chosen by interviewees)	Number of years in Canada	Number of years in Saskatoon
Anashe Ashirai	3	3

Sarah Mwende	5	5
Jayne	9	9
Ade Olu	6	6
Dennis Themba	4	4
Deng Jok	13	13
Adeline Uwena	4	2
Chimwemwe Butemwe	8	4
Imeah Edith	5	2
OJ	4	2
Nakato Mirembe	5	3
Patience Waridi	1 year, 2 months and 3 weeks	1 year and 2 months
Brother D	10	10
Useni Zikomo	9	9
Gozmok	3 years and 5months	3 years and 5 months
Maria Imani	1 year and 6 months	1 year and 6 months
Tumo Darweshi	14	14
Mama	10	10
Yeke Victor	7	7
Rich	1 year and 6 months	1 year 6 months

Some participants chose their own pseudonyms and the other names were chosen by the researcher based on African names from different countries.²² African names chosen for a person always have a meaning. The Catholic Church has recognized this by acknowledging African names for baptism or confirmation. The length of time participants lived in Canada/Saskatoon varied from 14 years for the most and one year, two months for the least.

Other interviewees provided the researcher with more information about the history of the African Catholic Community Mass; these people were present during the initial stages of the

²² The names used for the participants are pseudonyms chosen by the participants or the researcher with the participants; permission; the names used in the history of the African Mass are real names since those members contributed for the growth of the STM community and their names are part of the historical record.

African Mass (I did not use real names for the African priests):

Joel K: an African priest. The researcher interacted with him by telephone because he was too busy to meet in person.

Sisi Ghazi: an African priest. The researcher interacted with him by email during the initial start of the study.

The Pastor of Redeemed Christian Church of God in Saskatoon. The researcher conducted a face-to-face interview with him.

In addition to the interviews, I also used participant observation, where I used informal observational techniques to collect data. I actively participated as a member of the African Mass community and related worship activities, and keenly took note of what was taking place there for the study. Participant observation is key since it enabled me to immerse myself in the research setting, “observing dimensions of that setting, interaction, relationship, action and events within it.”²³ I have been active in participant observation continuously for 12 months, from October 2015 to October 2016. Mason notes,

If you are intending to enter a setting, situation or interaction, to carry out some form of observation, then you will need to prepare yourself not just for the process and technique of observance, but also for social interaction. You will be variously involved in observing, participating, interrogating, listening, communicating as well as a range of other forms of being, doing, and thinking.²⁴

I have been involved in covert participant observation, which means I joined the group I am studying, but my status was not immediately made known to the group. For me, this was helpful because it provided a more spontaneous, and thus more valid, impression of the group being studied. However, although I was not formally introduced to the whole group of the African Catholic community, the majority of members knew that I was carrying out research. This is because I used the snowball method to recruit the participants and, since the STM African Catholic community is a small congregation, the members knew what I was doing because the informants had asked other members if they would be willing to participate in the study. I interacted with them in many activities connected with the Mass, such as singing in the choir, planning liturgies, and participating in social events. The setting of the observation for the study was primarily the STM College Chapel during worship. However, the setting varied depending

²³ Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 1996, 60

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 63

where members of the African Catholic community were present and the specific activities being carried out, e.g., when members of the community are invited to sing for weddings or anniversaries at different churches, when visiting the sick members in hospital or at home, consoling or joining family members who are mourning the loss of a beloved person.

In addition, informal conversations with several pioneer members were included to get the information of how the STM African Mass came to be.

Table 2. Countries of origin and gender of participants

Countries in Africa	Number of participants	Male	Female
Nigeria	6	3	3
Ghana	5	3	2
Kenya	3	1	2
South Sudan	2	2	-
Congo	1	-	1
Rwanda	1	-	1
Uganda	1	1	-
Cameroon	1	1	-
Total	20	11	9

Table 3. Participants' highest level of education before migration (home country) and pursued in Canada during the time for interview

Level of Education in home country	Number of Participants	In Canada	Number of participants
Diploma in Social Sciences	1	English for science for two years	1
Secondary Education	1	Ongoing 4 th year Undergraduate in International Studies	1
Second year university doing economics	1	Degree in Economics and Masters in Economics	1
Secondary education	1	Degree in Social Work	1
Degree in Economics and Geography (Arts)	1	Masters in Economics	1
Degree in Chemistry	1	Masters in Pharmacy and finishing PhD in Pharmacy	1
Degree in Microbiology and Masters in Public health	1	PhD on vaccines	1
Degree in Nursing and Guidance and Counseling	1	Masters in Nursing and doing PhD in Nursing	1

Degree in Mass Communication	1	Master's in Public Administration	1
Degree in petroleum Engineering	1	-	
Degree in Biology (Education)	1	-	1
Degree in Geography and Sociology	1	Masters in Geography and Masters in Public Health	1
Diploma in Accounting	1	Doing Accounting	1
Degree in Business Administration (Education) and Post-Secondary certificates in Community Development and Youth leadership	1	Degree in Political Studies and Certificates in Project Management, Human Resource Management, and Executive Management	1
Secondary Education	1	Degree in International Studies, Masters in Public Administration, PhD in Educational Administration	1
Degree in pharmacy	1	Masters in Pharmacy	1
Diploma in Network Computer course	1	Discontinued online course in power engineering	1
Degree in Science and Masters in Science	1	PhD in Chemistry and doing A Bachelor of Science in Nursing	1
Degree in Bio-chemistry	1	Diploma in Clinical Epidemiology, Masters in Anatomy cell in Biology	1
Second year university in Accounting and management in Finance option	1	Discontinued program in Accounting and Management after 2 ½ years; wants to study social sciences	1

As Table 3 indicates, the majority of participants were highly educated before coming to Canada, mostly with the first degree, and many continued to pursue higher education after settling in Canada. Two participants had completed secondary education, one was continuing with secondary education and two were in the second year of the university back in Africa. Two participants did not receive any education in Canada.

Table 4. Participants' occupational status in Africa and Canada

Occupational Status	In Africa		In Canada	
	Number of	%	Number of	%

	participants		participants	
Student, full time	5	25	9	45
Self-employed	2	10	-	-
Employed	13	65	7	35
Unemployed	-	-	4	20
Totals	20	100	20	100

From participants' information concerning occupation, all were employed when in Africa. The participants did a range of work back in their home countries as follows: one was a nurse educator, two were teachers, one worked in a bank (Wa Cooperative Credit Union), one was a medical transcriptionist, one was doing research with a Kenyan Medical Research Institute, one worked with an International Livestock Research Institute, one worked at a Printing Company, one with Mastertrip Travels and Tours Limited, one worked with Ethno-botanical Medical Plants, one worked in the Telecom industry, one with the Ghanaian Constitution Review Commission, one was a receptionist and accountant for a clinic, and two were self-employed and owned their own businesses. As Maria said with pride, "In Nigeria, I was a nurse educator, I taught at the school of nursing. Actually I was the principal of the school." All the participants from Ghana and some from Nigeria worked as National Service Graduates²⁵ for a period of one year so as to meet the government requirements. As Mama explains,

Our education is kind of subsidized by the government so, you have to give back to the community more or less. So, everybody once you are done with the university not just university but any tertiary level of education you have to do a national service. So you do a national service for about a year and just get allowances for that. You are free to work anywhere for about a year, so I did that for a year, right after national service I came here. I came July 2006 to September 2009. So, then I went back to Ghana, I worked for almost two years. So I worked with a project, it was a government project. They were trying to review the Ghanaian constitution. It was called Constitution Review Commission. I worked for them for some time and then I worked at the University of Ghana as a researcher, as a Senior Research Assistant or something like that for less than a year before I came back so.

²⁵ National Service Graduates means working for the government for a period of one year with payment. The main purpose is to give back to the community service for the subsidized education that government offers. One can work in any part of the country. The National service provides newly qualified graduates the opportunity to have practical exposure on the job, both in the public and private sectors, as part of their civic responsibility. This is specifically applicable to the participants from Ghana and Nigeria.

Some participants were still students either in secondary level or post-secondary education (university) back in Africa. The students were involved in doing different chores in their homes and community-church related work, like Useni Zikomo:

In most cases [at home] I was just a child enjoying sports, school, helping my family through small scale mixed farming and also more into the Catholic Church as a choir member. Our choir group played a great role in helping to motivate ourselves and the community members in overcoming the challenges through communal small scale mixed farming, sporting activities, bible study and making bricks for building houses for orphans and widows in the camp.²⁶

Table 5. Immigration status of participants when arriving in Canada

Status	Number of participants	Percentage (%)
Immigrant	4	20
Refugee	3	15
International student	12	60
Temporary skilled worker	-	-
Visitor	1	5
Totals	20	100

The participants had different reasons and purposes for moving to Canada. Most of the participants came primarily for academic purposes, to gain high quality education. Gozmok said, “My main reason as I had said earlier is to come to study, I came here with a sole purpose of doing my Master’s degree.” Some participants came to Canada on scholarships, like Imeah: “Like I got scholarship back home to do my undergraduates so, yeah, I came here on scholarship to do.” Others came as permanent residents, like Sarah Mwende: “Oh, the reason why I came here was to join my husband. Who came as a student and applied for permanent residence for both of us.” Ade Olu added,

Prior to moving to Canada like I said I was an entrepreneur back home. I was an educator the same time and actively involved with youth leadership and development in the archdiocese. So, I was all over the place and I seemed to have lots of energy, that I always look for what more can I do....Hmm, not quite. I will say I am a forward looking individual (laughs). At some point in I moved Germany

²⁶ Camp means a place where people live in a temporary shelter, tents or huts either in one’s home country or another after they have been displaced from their homeland. In this case, it was where the refugees from South Sudan (fleeing from war) were living when they were in Kenya.

and lived there for a while and then went back to Nigeria, and then okay where else, then I looked at globe, Canada, yeah (laughs). Like I said, I am from a family where we aspire to do more and my parents and older siblings were always supportive of that, so I felt the need to advance myself and the same time introduce some of my own skill sets and values to the culture of whatever country that I would be going to spending a significant amount of my adult life, so Canada it is.

Some participants came with refugee status because they were offered settlement by the government of Canada; for instance, Zikomo recalled,

I moved to Canada in May 2007 as a refugee immigrant because of civil war in my country Sudan which is now South Sudan. I moved to Canada in order to get [a] second chance of living a normal life as a child raised in a camp and also to live in a most peaceful nation on the planet.

Some participants came to be with their family members. Rich said,

I came to Canada; first and foremost my wife was already here. So, her sisters who are my in-laws, of course, who is my in-law encouraged me to apply for that program and I found it very interesting and I did apply yeah and really irrespective of that. It has always my wish to move out my country Cameroon to experience how life is in other cultures and other societies and stuff like that. So, those were the main factors that really encouraged me to immigrate to Canada.

One participant, Yeke, owned a business back home and it was not progressing so he decided to move to Saskatoon because of better opportunities: “Yeah as I said because the company I was working for shut down. I had my own small business that business was not growing as planned so I decided to move here because there was a lot of opportunities here. That was the main reason of coming down here.”

One participant came as a visitor to meet her husband who was studying at the University of Saskatchewan.

In addition, the participants expressed varied reasons for moving to Saskatoon. Some participants came directly to Saskatoon from their home areas, especially those who had refugee status; one participant believes that Saskatoon was his destiny and that God was directing him. Another participant said when she reviewed the Department of Economics at the University of Saskatchewan the program was good for her Masters and the funding was good. Other participants came because they had relatives here, a husband, a wife or more distant relatives. Another participant came to Saskatoon because of a new job. Others came purposely to study at the University of Saskatchewan. Two participants came to Saskatoon because they wanted to

start a new life after one had lived in Quebec for two and half years and another in Newfoundland for two years.

Table 5. Whether participants had family members or friends before coming to Canada

Participant	Family	%	Friends	%	Family /friends		None	%
Canada	6	30	3	15	3	15	8	40
Saskatoon	4	20	5	25	1	5	10	50

The number of participants without family or friends was highest for either Canada or Saskatoon respectively (40%, 50%) compared to those with family, friends or both family and friends.

Another key aspect was whether the participants were born as Catholics before they came to Saskatoon. So most of the participants said, they were born and they were practicing Catholics (95%). Rich explained, “Yeah, I am a born in Roman Catholic, baptized Roman Catholic and I am a communicant in the Roman Catholic Church, yeah. So, it has been a culture ever since I was still a little boy I was brought up strictly in a Roman Catholic culture and I really do enjoy that so much.” As Nakato added, she is a Catholic “by blood.”

Only one participant converted to Catholicism when she got married. She had been a Pentecostal Christian, but surprisingly, during her early life, she attended Catholic schools where she learned most of the Catholic doctrines. She declared, “Ah no, actually I became a Catholic (laughs) through my husband but I was raised as a Pentecostal, yeah.” She added, “I was really involved with the church because I went to a boarding school. Actually, all my schooling was in Catholic schools. So I am very familiar with the Catholic faith yeah, yeah. But my church, I mean I grew up in a Pentecostal so that is where I was going” during school holidays.

In response to the question of how the participants had been involved with church activities in their home countries, the findings showed that, most of the participants were actively involved in church activities before they came to Saskatoon or Canada, that is, when they were in their home countries. Some of the activities which they were involved can be grouped into the following categories:

i) Singing in a choir

Most of the participants said they belonged to vibrant choirs, either during their high school life, universities or in their own parishes. Africans believe that when you sing you pray

twice. This makes many people committed to singing in their churches to give praise and thanks to God. This encourages them to be more devoted and committed. One participant acknowledged their choir was able to produce an album when she was in university. Mama remembered,

Oh, when I was doing my undergraduate I was actually in the choir. Like we had a very good choir, students' choir on campus yeah. So, I was in the choir so we used to sing at mass. We had two masses like morning mass at eight thirty and one at nine thirty or ten thirty. So most of us would go like for the early mass the first mass so like the students choir took care of the singing and everything so it was fun it was like a very vibrant choir because we used to go to other parishes to sing, we eventually came up with an album so it was very, very good.

Chimwemwe added,

I was involved in the church in Ghana during my university time ... At the university, I joined Pax Romana Choir, the resident Choir of the Catholic Chaplaincy. I started singing in the university, then I got actively involved with Pax Romana (International Movement of Catholic Students), which led me into a lot of activities such as Choralfest (choral concert). I was also writing the concert brochure, and served as editor of student magazine, *Pax Herald*.

He added, "I did a lot of things. I did advocating for childhood in Ghana and we were looking at how important the health of a child and the health of the mother are to the economy of Ghana. We found that mostly of them were deprived in the communities surrounding the hospital. We used our gift of singing to organize the choral concert to raise funds to support deprived children and also to help the child health department in the hospital."

ii) Bible studies

Some participants had actively participated in bible studies in Africa. Waridi said, "Aah, I was a chorister back home, I think that's all... Then I used to belong to St. Joan of Arc Society in (St. Gregory Catholic Church, Eket) ... I was just a member yeah. But we prayed together, we group young ladies together and you know we read the bible, we share the bible and we talk about the society, we talked about the life of St. Joan of Arc while on earth."

iii) Prayer

Another activity frequently mentioned by participants was praying together with members of the community. Some said, they prayed the rosary every day for themselves, their families and their countries as whole. Others had gone on retreats, Catholic charismatic prayers, and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Themba stated,

Yes, we had, when I was high school we had so many clubs. One of the clubs was called Legionaries. So it was called Legions of Mary, so I was part of that, we used to pray rosary almost every day evening at 6 pm. I would say that is the activity I got mostly involved in ... So, we had class organized masses every Sunday, each class would take turn. So I used to participate as altar boy sometimes.

iv) Mass servers

Most of the male participants said they served as altar servers during mass when they were in home countries. Ade Olu observed, “Yes, very much so, I was a wonderful altar boy server and I enjoyed learning from my elder brother who himself is a priest. And he was the president of altar boys when I joined, so you can imagine, I needed to learn and know everything in the sacristy by heart.”

v) Catholic Church movements or clubs in schools

Most participants belonged to different church movements practiced in the Catholic Church as well as clubs in schools: Focolare Movement, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Joan of Arc, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Legion of Mary, Young Christian Workers Students’ Union in parish, Young Catholic Students, Young Christian Society, Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria, Fish Youth Group, and International Movement of Catholic students. These movements and clubs motivated other youth members who were “going astray.” These groups organized drama festivals, sports, and masses for the youth. This brought youth together so they could participate in church activities instead of going out and doing other things that could put them at risk. Deng Jok narrated,

Back in Kenya, I was a member of church choir. I also participated in organizing masses in my village. Yeah, we have a small chapel, so instead of going to cathedral every Sunday, some Sundays we had mass at our village. So, as I said, I participated in church activities, I was a member of choir, and I also helped in organizing the masses ... Yes, there was, ah I don’t know whether this one is still in place, there was a group called Fish Youth Group, it was a youth group that was started by, I don’t remember exactly the name since it has been a while, but then I was a member of the Fish Group. So, we kind of motivated other youth members who were going astray and we organized drama festivals and sometimes sports, we also held masses for the youth yeah. That somehow brought the youth together so they could participate in activities instead of going out and doing other things that could put them to, at risk.

Nakato said, “I am a continuous member of the youth. I was actively involved in the Focolare Movement²⁷ ...So it mostly did outreaching yeah... Trying to think, been an usher in church when Sacred Heart is serving the mass or the youth.”

vi) Liturgical dancers

One participant emphasized that she was active in liturgical dancing during the mass back in Africa. During mass, dances can be performed during the entrance song, bible reading, offertory, and thanksgiving songs. This keeps the young children and youth active in church.



Liturgical dances during Pope Francis visit to Kenya 2016

vii) Works of mercy

Most participants had been involved in doing a lot of works of mercy in their parishes: volunteering in the refugee camps to assist widows and orphans through constructing hut houses or tents for them; cultivating for those who have farms and planting in their farms; cleaning church environments, for instance, weeding and sweeping; setting up rooms for church functions; evangelism; visiting the sick in homes and hospitals; visiting prisoners. Also, some worked with women in the parish, doing catechesis, home care, and home visitation.

Useni Zikomo recalled the many church-related activities he had participated in back home:

Well, actually every Sunday, every Sunday. Maybe the only time when I will miss going to church is when I am seriously sick, seriously sick. But before then actually every Sunday I used to go to church every Sunday. It is interesting you get to sing, like to socialize with friends, it was really good because when I was back home in actually home Africa there, I used to go to Catholic church and also I used to go to a church called I think United Church. I think it was a church like was Korean who

²⁷ The Focolare Movement is a Catholic Church group where the members are involved with an outreach mission of evangelization. The members try to live to be better persons every day, by being the little flames of love to all people.

went there in the refugee camp, they started training people how to play karate and kind of such stuff just something like for build mental health and stuff like that. And, so in their church they had a choir and it was very strong choir group because what we did in that group is like we try to volunteer in the refugee camp, like because there is widows and orphans and very, very vulnerable in that refugee camp lifestyle. So what we did is we came together as youths and then we say we have to go around and help those people who were struggling and do what we have to do. We can offer them the only help what we do we go to their home and if they have farm, we cultivate and then plant for them; cassava, potatoes, maize and all those kinds of stuff which is really, really helpful. Because they are just widows and maybe they have little kids who cannot dig for them. And then also sometimes find the house when I say house is like tents, those tents, those refugee tents or the African small grass houses called huts ... So sometimes you find that they don't have a well-built [shelter], so we have come together as youths, lay bricks and then build for them a house so that they can sleep at least at a better warm place. So, that was the only offer we can help because we are also in the refugee camp. We own nothing, we don't have anything all what we do is, we use our own energy that we have at least to make sure that they can have food by cultivating for them and if they can sleep in a very conducive environment which is good for them and children. So, those kinds of things actually it makes me grow up because it makes me feel, I think sometimes is good to help those who are suffering because you never know tomorrow it would be you or somebody else. So, they usually say world is rotating around.

viii) Social life

Participants mentioned that when they went to church in Africa they were able to socialize with friends, have constant interaction with their colleagues, serve as each other's keeper, and entertain people through playing guitar during church functions; others simply enjoyed going to mass. And a great number agreed that they were active in church either during the week or through regular attendance at Sunday mass. For instance, Tumo remembers:

Yeah, when I was a little kid you know my dad was a deacon before. He wanted to become a priest, and he gave up at the last minute and he made sure that we go to the church every Sunday. Though sometime I didn't like it.... You know kids want to sleep in the morning, so he made sure that we go. But I was a choir member and I also liked to read in the church. Yeah doing those youth things, just music, entertainment like during occasions. Yeah, playing guitar music to entertain people.

In conclusion, the interviewees' responses revealed that in Africa, they had been actively involved, committed, and dedicated to church activities.

1.6 Conceptual framework

Since it focuses on the cultural adaptation of a specific group of African immigrants to

Canada, the study found culture shock theory useful. When newcomers come to Canada, they experience different cultures which are unfamiliar to them.²⁸ In addition, I have interrogated the oft-quoted assertion that Africans are notoriously religious²⁹ and the Roman Catholic theology of inculturation.

1.6. 1 Culture shock theory

Several conceptual paradigms were considered as means of analysing the research data. For example, acculturation, defined as the process by which people move from the culture in which they were born and raised to a new, unfamiliar culture,³⁰ was considered as a framework. However, culture shock theory was chosen due to the fact participants actually spoke of their experiences of culture shock (either using the term or an equivalent) as one of the major barriers they encountered to adaptation into Canadian society. This fact gives the culture shock model more weight and applicability to the interviewees. However, it should be noted that acculturation is recognized by culture shock theory in the stages of adjustment and acceptances (see below).

Culture shock theory plays a very important role in my thesis because all African Catholic members who participated in this study arrived as newcomers from Africa to Saskatoon. They were introduced to a new culture that is different from their individual cultural identities shaped in their respective countries of origin, which have varied ethnic cultural backgrounds as well as overarching national identities. For instance, Kenya has 42 ethnic tribes, not including people from other nationalities who are Kenyan citizens. Each Kenyan has her or his distinct cultural heritage.

Tracey Wilen defines culture shock as a feeling of depression, disorientation, and homesickness, alienation, intimidation, frustration, boredom and exhaustion, especially for those who travel alone to live in a foreign country.³¹ Kalervo Oberg defines it this way:

Culture shock is precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse. These signs or cues include the thousand and one ways in which we orient ourselves to the situations of daily life ... All of

²⁸Yuefang Zhou, Divya Jindal-Snape, Keith Topping, and John Todman, "Theoretical Models of Culture Shock and Adaptation in International Students in Higher Education," *Studies in Higher Education* 33, no. 1 (2008): 66, accessed September, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03075070701794833>

²⁹ Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophy*, 1.

³⁰ David L. Sam and John W. Berry, "Acculturation: When Individuals and Groups of Different Cultural Backgrounds Meet," *Perspective on Psychological Science* 5, no. 4 (2010): 472; accessed June, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41613454>

³¹Tracey Wilen-Daugenti, *China for Businesswomen: A Strategic Guide to Travel, Negotiating, and Cultural Differences* (Berkley: Stone Bridge Press, 2007), 36.

us depend for our peace of mind and our efficiency on hundreds of these cues, most of which we do not carry on the level of conscious awareness.³²

This concurs with what Edward Dutton notes; culture shock is a kind of stress brought about by a situation where reality is suddenly unpredictable and difficult to work out. The person in a foreign environment will remain in a state of anxiety until he or she can form new ways of dealing with the situation.³³

Oberg argues that culture shock might be called an occupational disease of people who have been transplanted abroad.³⁴ Dutton claims that it is useful to view culture shock as an illness.³⁵ He quotes Furnham and Bochner who suggest that in mild doses, culture shock can be important for self-improvement and personal growth, and it can result in new attitudes, values and patterns of behaviour.³⁶ He adds that the “illness metaphor is appropriate because illness itself can cause people to re-evaluate their lives and even think in a more positive way.”³⁷ Coleen Ward et al. confirm that recent investigations have supported earlier research findings linking migration and mental health problems. For instance, Jews from the former Soviet Union who immigrated to Israel report more symptoms of demoralization (low self-esteem, hopelessness, dread, sadness, anxiety, and psychosomatic symptoms) than Israel-born settlers of European descent.”³⁸ Oberg explains,

When an individual enters a strange culture, all or most of these familiar cues are removed. He or she is like a fish out of water. No matter how broad-minded or full of good will you may be, a series of props have been knocked from under you, followed by a feeling of frustration and anxiety. People react to the frustration in much the same way. First, they reject the environment which causes the discomfort: “the ways of the host country are bad because they make us feel bad.” ... when Americans or other foreigners in a strange land get together to grouse about the host country and its people—you can be sure they are suffering from culture shock. Another phase of culture shock is regression. The home environment suddenly assumes a tremendous importance. To an American everything American becomes irrationally glorified. All the difficulties and problems are forgotten and only the

³²Kalervo Oberg, “Culture Shock. Presentation to the Women’s Club of Rio De Janeiro” (August 3, 1954), 1 accessed October 21, 2016. citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.461.5459&rep=rep1... by K Oberg - 1954.

³³Edward Dutton, *Culture Shock and Multiculturalism: Reclaiming A Useful Model from the Religious Realm* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 101.

³⁴Oberg, “Culture Shock,” 1.

³⁵Dutton, *Culture Shock and Multiculturalism*, 78.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Coleen Ward, Stephen Bochner, and Adrian Furnham, *The Psychology of Culture Shock*, 2nd ed. (Hove East Sussex: Routledge, 2001), 202.

good things back home are remembered. It usually takes a trip home to bring one back to reality.³⁹

Oberg identifies symptoms of culture shock such as “excessive washings of hands ... the absentminded ... terrible longing to be back home ... in general to talk to people who really make sense.”⁴⁰ He notes that there are a few people who cannot live in foreign countries due to the severity of culture shock; however, most people are able to survive culture shock and eventually adjust to it.

As Dutton asserts, the difficulties which newcomers experience are real. This is echoed by Wilen-Daugenti, using the example of Americans abroad:

For many Americans in foreign countries, the language barrier is often the most difficult issue to cope with. If you do not know even basic Chinese phrases, you will feel very isolated. How do you communicate with others to find a place to eat or to find your way around town? The street signs are in Chinese, as are the names on shops and menus. What do you do for entertainment? The movies are in a foreign language and there are few places available where you can socialize easily. You suddenly feel very alienated.⁴¹

Oberg identifies several discernment processes or stages that culture shock entails. These are the honeymoon phase, crisis/aggression phase, recovery phase, and adjustment phase:

In the honeymoon stage, the individual arrives in a new country. This phase is brief, it may last few days or weeks. Things are seen as new, different, and interesting. He notes, “This honeymoon stage may last from few days or weeks to six months, depending on circumstances. If one is a very important person he or she will be shown the show places, will be pampered and petted, and in a press interview will speak glowingly about progress, goodwill, and international amity, and if he returns home may well write a book about his pleasant if superficial experience abroad.”⁴²

In the crisis stage, the newcomer develops negative perceptions of the host culture and its differences from her/his culture of origin. The newcomer begins to experience real and intractable problems. However,

This cook’s tour type of mentality does not normally last if the foreign visitor remains abroad and has seriously to cope with real conditions of life. It is then [that] the second stage begins, characterized by a hostile and aggressive attitude towards the host country ... you band together with your fellow countrymen and

³⁹ Oberg, “Culture Shock,” 1-2.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Wilen-Daugenti, *China for Businesswomen*, 37.

⁴² Oberg, “Culture Shock,” 2.

criticize the host country, its ways and its people ... you talk as if the difficulties you experience are more or less created by the people of the host country for your special discomfort ... if you overcome it you stay, if not you leave before you reach the stage of nervous breakdown.⁴³

An aspect of the crisis stage, unacknowledged in the literature on culture shock that surfaced in my research on African newcomers was the tendency to become super-religious. This tendency was an aspect of religious culture shock for some African newcomers. African newcomers feel that they are missing something in their lives as Christians when they come to western countries. Then they experience the urge to re-evangelize. They tend to think that the host churches are less religious than the churches in Africa and that the local churches are not able to meet their religious demands. One member pointed out one of the key objectives of the African Mass is to be missionaries. Also, some participants pointed out that when they go to African-based churches, they feel much at home with the more enthusiastic style of preaching, singing and dancing. For example, the Pastor explains that he was going to church only on Sundays when he came to Saskatoon but he was dying spiritually. So he was not satisfied, he wanted more of God. So later he started a church which was able to meet their demands as Africans which were not met by Canadian churches. He said,

So, I worshipped in Tabernacle for about a year when I came here. But because of my background back at home we don't just go to church on Sundays. We go to church on Sundays and there is always a program either on Mondays or Tuesdays, Wednesday, Thursday, Fridays and Saturday to do something for God. But when I came here, I was going to church only on Sundays and I was dying spiritually, I was dying spiritually. So what I then did is I met a young man as well who was not satisfied, wanted more of God.... we talked, our talking was all about bible and we were excited and I realized we had a common mind. This is somebody I need to have as a friend, birds of the same feather fly together. Basically, I came up with idea and I said why we don't spend time praying. So every Sunday we went to our different churches but on Fridays we come to my house. And we pray.

The Pastor's dissatisfaction with the local churches is evident: "There are so many people who go to churches and if Rapture comes today maybe only one person will make it. There are churches they know, they are deceiving themselves, if you sincerely ask members of that church—do you think you will go to heaven—they know they are not going." Some Africans even come with their own pastors from Africa to minister to them in the African independent churches (in Saskatoon, the Redeemed Christian Church of God).

⁴³ Ibid., 3.

In the recovery phase, the individual learns how to function in the new culture and be independent. He or she develops problem-solving skills and conflict resolution mechanisms. As Oberg describes it,

If the visitor succeeds in getting some knowledge of the language and begins getting around himself, he is beginning to open the way into the new cultural environment. The visitor still has difficulties but takes a “this is my cross and I have to bear it” attitude. Usually, in this stage, the visitor takes a superior attitude to people of the host country.⁴⁴

Finally, in the adjustment phase, the individual starts to adapt to the new culture, embrace its differences, and accepts what it has to offer. This phase brings a sense of satisfaction, accomplishment, and personal growth for having overcome culture shock. Oberg further notes,

In the fourth stage your adjustment is about as complete as it can be. The visitor now accepts the customs of the country as just another way of living. You operate within the new milieu without a feeling of anxiety although there are moments of strain. Only with a complete grasp of all the cues of social intercourse will this strain disappear ... With complete adjustment you not only accept the foods, drinks, habits, and customs but actually begin to enjoy them. When you go on home leave you may even take things back with you and if you leave for good you generally miss the country and the people to whom you have become accustomed.⁴⁵

To be able to overcome culture shock faster and be able to adapt to the host country, Oberg advises,

There is a great difference in knowing what is the cause of your disturbance and not knowing. Once you realize that your trouble is due to your own lack of understanding of other people’s cultural background and your own lack of the means of communication rather than the hostility of an alien environment, you realize that you yourself can gain this understanding and these means of communication. And the sooner you do this, the sooner culture shock will disappear.⁴⁶

He adds that it is important to get advice from fellow compatriots on what one can do to get over culture shock. He concludes, “Although talking does not remove the pain I think a great deal is gained by having the source of pain explained, some of the steps towards cure indicated, and the assurance given that time, the great healer, will soon set things right.”⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Ibid., 3.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 4

⁴⁶ Ibid., 8

⁴⁷ Ibid., 9

Culture shock is a theme explicitly raised by the participants. The exact phrase was mentioned by four participants (20%). Other participants expressed culture shock in different ways, referring to when they were newly arrived in Saskatoon and found everything to be different from their expectations; expressions such as “[Canadian] culture is different” appeared 68 times.

1.6.2 African religiosity

Religiosity may be termed as one’s level of religious commitment, being religious, piety and devotion. Many scholars have quoted John Mbiti, a Kenyan-born philosopher, to the effect that Africans are notoriously religious.⁴⁸ These scholars include Laurenti Magesa, who emphasizes that for Africans, religion is a “way of life or life itself, where a distinction or separation is not made between religion and other areas of human existence.”⁴⁹ He adds that “if one speaks of ‘revelation’ or ‘inspiration,’ it is not found in a book, not even primarily in the people’s oral tradition, but in their lives. Herein lies the ‘notoriety’ or ‘incurability’ of African religiosity noted by Mbiti and others.”⁵⁰ So, for Africans, it is difficult to separate religion and life. Magesa continues, “For Africans religion is quite literally life and life is religion.”⁵¹ Mndende is in agreement with Mbiti when he acknowledges: “Religion is part of the fibre of society; it is deeply ingrained in social life, and it is impossible to isolate and study it as a distinct phenomenon; therefore when members of a family or clan gather together in a sacrificial ritual for the ancestors, that is a religious activity conducted in honour of an ancestor or ancestors.”⁵² Similarly, Kwame Gyekye observes,

a number of scholars have made the observation that African people are very religious, and that religion permeates their lives. Mbiti asserted that Africans are notoriously religious, and each people has its own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices. Religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possibly always to isolate it. According to him ‘in traditional life there are no atheists.’⁵³

Kodzo Muwasi observes of the west African Ewe people and their traditional religion, it is

⁴⁸ Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophy*, 1.

⁴⁹ Laurenti Magesa, *African Traditional Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 25.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., 26.

⁵² Mndende N, “Spiritual reality in South Africa,” in *Secular Spirituality as a Contextual Critique of Religion*, eds. C. du Toit & C. Mayson (UNISA: Pretoria 2006), 161.

⁵³ Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 203.

clear that religion forms the foundation and governing principle of their existence. In other words, the whole life of the Ewes from the rising of the sun to its setting, is a religious one. Muwasi echoes Mbiti when he writes, “Each people has its own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices. Religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it.”⁵⁴ Similarly, in his study of African Christians in the U.K., Chigor Chike highlights that “spiritual and physical aspects of life are inseparable.”⁵⁵ So, many African scholars who have conducted research on different ethnic groups from different parts of Africa are in agreement with Mbiti that Africans tend to be intensely religious. As the following pages will show, this concurs with my interviews with members of STM African Mass who came from different parts of Africa.

African scholars’ contribution to this discussion is important. As Ezra Chitando notes in his article, “African Christian Scholars and the Study of African Traditional Religions: A Re-evaluation,”⁵⁶ non-African scholars have tended to see “Africa as object” in comparison to

⁵⁴ Kodzo Mawusi, *African Theology: A Study of African Theology within an African Traditional Religion (The Eves of Ghana) and Within a Comparative Study of Christian Tradition* (Victoria, Canada: Friesen Press, 2015), 40; Several other scholars (Guy Martin, Jeffrey Parrinder, Prudentius Emeka, Patrick Baraza, Richard Gehman, Harvey Sindima, Aylward Shorter, Jele S. Manganyi and Johan Buitendag, Daniel R. Magaziner, Nyameko Pityana, Clement Majawa, and *Sunday Independent*) have quoted Mbiti’s words in their studies by showing how religion is important to African lives: religion and life are inseparable, religion is naturally ingrained in the lives of people, indigenous religions and indigenous cultures are not easily distinguished as exclusive from one another, religion embraces all of life, in the African world, there is no place that is not filled with religion. They quote Mbiti by inserting a part or whole of the statement that Africans are notoriously religious; see Guy Martin, *African Political Thought* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 12; Geoffrey Parrinder, *Religion in Africa* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), 235; Aroh Prudentius Emeka, *Priestly Celibacy: A Gift and Commitment* (can. 277 § 1): *Adaptation to Igbo Culture, Nigeria* (Roma: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2014), 196; Patrick Wanakuta Baraza, *Drumming up Dialogue: The Dialogue Philosophies of Martin Buber, Fred Ikle, and William Ury Compared and Applied to the Babukusu Community of Kenya* (Bloomington: iUniverse, Inc., 2011), 7-8; Richard J. Gehman, *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective*, rev. ed. (Nairobi: East African Publishers, 2005), 55; Harvey J. Sindima, *Introduction to Religious Studies* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2012), 25; Aylward Shorter, “Secularism in Africa Introducing the Problem” <https://www.scribd.com/document/42729537/Africans-Are-Notoriously-Religious> accessed January 27, 2017), 1; Jele S. Manganyi and Johan Buitendag, “A critical analysis on African Traditional Religion and the Trinity” *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 69, no.1 (2013): 3; Daniel R. Magaziner, *The Law and the Prophets: Black Consciousness in South Africa, 1968-1977* (Athens Jacana/Johannesburg: Ohio State Press, 2010), 56; Nyameko Pityana, “What is Black consciousness?” in *Know Thyself: Ideologies of Black Liberation*, ed. Gwinyai H. Muzorewa (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publisher, 2005), 69; Clement Majawa “African Christianity in the post-Vatican II Era,” in *The Routledge Companion to Christianity in Africa*, ed. Elias Kifon Bongmba (New York: Routledge, 2016), 226; *Sunday Independent*, why are we ‘notoriously religious’? (September 28, 2014) www.iol.co.za/.../why-are-we-notoriously-religious-1756867.

⁵⁵ Chigor Chike, *African Christianity in Britain: Diaspora, Doctrines and Dialogue* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2007), 36.

⁵⁶ Chitando Ezra, “African Christian scholars and the Study of African traditional Religions: A Re-evaluation.” *Religion* 30, no.4 (2000): 391, DOI: 10.1006/reli.2000.0290.

African scholars who see “Africa as subject.”⁵⁷ Chitando explains that Mbiti and other African scholars are responding to a nineteenth-century western perspective on Africa developed “when foreign missionaries, colonial administrators and overseas anthropologists gave their home countries the first inkling of African Religion.”⁵⁸ During this period, “African Traditional Religions were distorted through prejudice and insensitivity on the part of foreign observers.”⁵⁹ So, African scholars, including Christian scholars like Mbiti, conducted research about African religiosity to counter the marginalisation of local cultures, religions and their own heritage.⁶⁰ In a sense, the African scholars’ perspective illumines the African newcomers in Saskatoon who strive to practice culturally appropriate African worship in a Canadian context out of a conviction of the value and distinctiveness of African religiosity.

The practice of Christianity is central in the lives of many Africans through their frequency of attendance at religious services, prayer meetings, and the reading of sacred texts. As observed above, in the African view, to be religious means that one cannot separate religion and one’s way of life. Quality of religiosity is important in this study because of the scholarly consensus that Africans are highly religious people. The “notorious” religiosity of Africans surfaced in the interviews, as the participants often stressed how religious they were in their respective countries. There, participants expressed their devotion by going to church every Sunday and, for some participants, every day. This is also seen by their commitment to church activities and their participation in various religious devotions to enrich their lives.

Some scholars, notably, Jan Platvoet and Henk Van Rinsum, disagree that Africa is “incurably” (or “notoriously”) religious and regard this assertion as a myth. In support of their argument, Platvoet and Van Rinsum claim “both Mbiti and p’Bitek were inspired, and constrained, in their interpretation of the indigenous religions of Africa, by particular developments in Western intellectual history.”⁶¹ They add that, it is more a rather critical, reflexive exercise in the methodology of the Western study of the religions of Africa, whether by European or African scholars, than a substantive proof, or disproof, of either the views of Mbiti

⁵⁷ Ibid., 391.

⁵⁸ John Mbiti, “Challenges Facing Religious Education and Research in Africa: The Case of Dialogue Between Christianity and African Religion,” *Religion and Theology* 3, no.2 (1996): 170. DOI: 10.1163/157430196X00176

⁵⁹ Ibid., 170.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Jan Platvoet and Henk Van Rinsum, “Is Africa Incurably Religious? Confessing and Contesting an Invention,” *Exchange* 32, no.2 (2003): 22, accessed November 7, 2016. aasr.eentweddrieweb.nl/PDF/Exchange.IsAfricaIncurablyReligious.pdf

or p'Bitek. Such generalisations seem always to contain more ideology than fact, being extrapolated from very limited historical and/or regional data in highly selective and biased ways, and declared valid for the whole of Africa.⁶² They concluded, "Instead, it seems prudent to hold that, however, much as the trajectories of the religions of Europe and Africa actually differ, Africa was, is, and will basically be no more and no less a religious, and religiously indifferent, continent than Europe."⁶³ However, it is significant for the purposes of this thesis that many African scholars agree with the assertion that Africans are notoriously religious, and this quality of African religiosity is evidenced by the interview results discussed below.

In African, religiosity is expressed in many different ways. In most African countries, there are days considered to be holy when people literally do not go to work. For instance, Catholic and many Protestant churches worship on Sundays; some, like Seventh Day Adventists, worship on Saturday and Muslims on Fridays. What is different in Canada is that, in a city like Saskatoon, people are expected to go to work on holy days, including Sundays. Thus, many African newcomers find it challenging to balance church and work. For Africans, these are obligatory days for people to exercise their piety. Furthermore, most African churches have religious activities every day so that members will not lose their faith and will remain focused on Jesus.

Another aspect of distinctively African religiosity is that Africans express themselves through songs and dance in a special way. Chigor Chike points out the importance of African Christian songs in understanding of African Christologies (theological interpretations of the significance of Jesus Christ). For instance, he observes, "African Christian songs are another important source for the understanding of African Christologies . . . to ignore songs might mean missing what has been described as the 'very real Christology' that exists in these churches. The dominant theme in these songs is still Jesus' victories."⁶⁴

Another central aspect of African religiosity is worldview and understanding of God. Chike argues that Africans interpret Christianity holistically into their overall worldview, and so they experience the spiritual and material as one and the same, rather than the more dualistic view of westerners.⁶⁵ He adds:

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Chike, *African Christianity in Britain*, 55.

⁶⁵ Ibid., ix.

Africans instinctively experience God as a powerful, supernatural being who engages with the whole person and not just their souls as the missionaries tended to teach. There is a God who is Creator, Provider, Healer and Judge. It is for this reason that many left the mission churches ... and set up independent churches that embraced this holistic emphasis that resonated with their traditional culture.⁶⁶

This is echoed by John Mbiti when he observes the African view that God is the Source and Sustainer of life. He continues, “African religiosity acknowledges the reality of God but does not define God. If anything, it confesses that God is unknowable. The Maasai (Kenya and Tanzania) name for God, *Engai* means (among others) the Unseen One, the Unknown.”⁶⁷

Another characteristic factor of African Christianity is use of the bible. Africans try to relate biblical teaching to their day-to-day lives. Back home, most of the interviewees had participated in bible studies and reflection once week to nourish their faith. In addition, Vellem Vuyani argues that “African religiosity is the site of liberation spirituality ... African religiosity does not require inclusion in Western frameworks but equal recognition as a value system amongst others.”⁶⁸ Chike notes that when Christian missionaries came to sub-Saharan Africa, they engaged in a “blanket” condemnation of all aspects of African culture. They “proscribed important elements of African culture and practices, describing them as anti-religious ... so that becoming Christian always meant, in part, setting oneself off from the inheritance of the past.”⁶⁹ The mission churches have started integrating African culture into their church life. Chike observes that “significantly, many of the ‘mission churches’ even though they continue to maintain strong ties with Europe, have started to allow the influence of African culture and tradition into their church life.”⁷⁰

Eloi Messi Metogo, in discussing different African Pentecostal churches, notes that the neo-Pentecostal churches have a great number of members and their theology holds that material prosperity as a sign of divine blessing.⁷¹ This theology emphasizes that the life of abundance that flows from Jesus’ victory over sin and death is not primarily concerned with the next life but

⁶⁶Ibid., x.

⁶⁷John Mbiti, “General manifestation of African religiosity: an explanatory paper at the first meeting of the standing committee on the contribution of Africa to the Religious heritage of the world,” accessed October 17, 2016, <https://www.scribd.com/document/.../General-Manifestations-of-African-Religiosity>.

⁶⁸Vuyani S.Vellem, “Spirituality of Liberation: A conversation with African religiosity,” *HTS Theologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 70, no.1 (2014): 1.

⁶⁹Chike, *African Christianity in Britain: Diaspora*, 2.

⁷⁰Ibid., 3-4

⁷¹Neo-Pentecostal means the new emerging Pentecostal churches focusing on prosperity of its members.

with the present. The key promises of this kind of theology are wealth, health, prestige, prosperity.⁷² He keenly observes that,

most of the people who pour into the vast prayer spaces of neo-Pentecostal churches are in fact Africans most heavily burdened with destitution and sickness, uprooted by unemployment and the crises of African states ... in the prayer assemblies, they can at least sing, dance, speak out, give free rein to their feelings, and so forth.⁷³

He argues that this theology of success, though it wraps the poor in a blanket of illusions, at least makes them dream of a change coming directly from God. In my experience, this is true because many churches in Africa have large congregations, and most of the members are poor and suffering. This concurs with the opinion of the parish priest, the Rev. Ikenna Ikechi in Nigeria, who says he ministers to 10,000 people when he celebrates six masses on every Sunday. Most of the people are poor, suffering and even lack shelter.⁷⁴

1.6.3 The Roman Catholic theology of inculturation

The Roman Catholic theology of inculturation is a distinctively Catholic theological concept that emerged in the wake of Vatican II (1962-1965), defined as “the intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity in the various human cultures.”⁷⁵ Aylward Shorter defines inculturation as an “ongoing dialogue between faith and culture or cultures, the creative and dynamic relationship between the Christian message and a culture or cultures.”⁷⁶ He quotes Pedro Arrupe who defines inculturation as “the incarnation of Christian life and of the Christian message in a particular cultural context, in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question (this alone would be no more than a superficial adaptation) but becomes a principle that animates,

⁷² Eloi Messi Metogo, ed., *African Christianities*, Concilium (London: SCM Press, 2006), 25.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Adam Nossiter, “Church Helps Fill a Void in Africa” *New York Times* 24 Feb. 23, 2013: A6 (L). *Expanded Academic ASAP*. Web. 11 Oct. 2016. URL. accessed July 16, 2016, <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=EAIM&sw=w&u=usaskmain&v=2.1&id=GALE%7CA320137466&it=r&asid=f0b697d1b45c0bece95dc36cb315202b> (MLA 7th ed.)

⁷⁵ Catherine Caulfield, “Theology of Inculturation and the Faith: The Oblate-Aboriginal Encounter in Alberta,” *Canadian Journal for Scholarship and the Christian Faith*, [http://journal.ccsf.org/journal/church-history/theology-of-inculturation/\(2016\)](http://journal.ccsf.org/journal/church-history/theology-of-inculturation/(2016)). It should be noted that reason for using the Roman Catholic theology of inculturation as part of the framework of the study is that inculturation is an important theme that arose out of the interviews conducted with the members of STM African Mass. The participants expressed how African culture has been inculturated in Catholic Church, especially in the STM African Mass. However, this study is not a theological study so it does not engage in a broader theological discussion. The focus is on inculturation *as understood by the members of the community*.

⁷⁶ Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), 11.

directs and unifies the culture, transforming it and remaking it so as to bring about a ‘new creation.’”⁷⁷ Inculturation is particularly at home in African Catholicism, as noted by Shorter, and indeed, some participants in this study mentioned inculturation in the STM African Mass especially with reference to liturgy. In his book, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity, and Catechesis*, Anscar Chupungco quotes Valenziano in defining inculturation especially in connection with liturgy: “Inculturation is a method that can bring about mutual interaction between liturgy and the various forms of popular religiosity.”⁷⁸

Inculturation is another important theme that arose out of the interviews I conducted. As we shall see, the kind of inculturation expressed in the STM African Mass is different from the kind practiced in Africa where Catholicism is expressed in terms of local African cultures which can be described as interculturalism.⁷⁹ In the STM African Mass, in contrast, Africans from many different nations and cultures are bringing African Catholic culture/cultures to a Canadian church in Saskatoon. The African newcomers brought this concept of their worship to Saskatoon in Canada, which has another culture and that values multiculturalism. In Canada, multiculturalism is a policy enshrined in federal law (1988). It acknowledges the freedom and importance of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance, and share their multicultural heritage.⁸⁰ The term inculturation/inculturated appeared four times in the interviewees’ transcripts but was also expressed in different ways. For instance, Ade Olu observed that one of the key objectives of the STM African Mass is to worship by way of inculturation:

The key objective was to worship together as brethren Catholics. But to put together a little bit of dimension to that mode of worship by way of inculturation. We are Catholics, we are Christians and we are also people of very unique culture and when I say we, I don’t mean one part of Africa I mean all parts of Africa have a

⁷⁷ Pedro Arrupe, “Letter to the Whole Society,” *Studies in the International Apostolate of Jesuits* 7 (1978): 1-9.

⁷⁸ Anscar J. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation Sacramentals, Religiosity, and Catechesis* (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press Collegeville, 1992), 26.

⁷⁹ The terminology of interculturalism is not commonly used. However, Grenham defines interculturalism as “diverse cultures with plural religious perspectives interacting with each other for the betterment of humankind locally and globally.” He adds that, “At the core process is the vision of the gospel which is interpreted both culturally and religiously from different religious and non-religious perspectives” (Thomas G. Grenham, “The Unknown God: Religious and Theological Interculturalism,” *Religions and Discourse* 25 [2005]: 69). The same author in his “Interculturalism: Exploring changing Religious, Cultural, and Faith Identities in an African Context,” concludes that interculturalism helps in recognising that diverse cultures and religious perspectives will interact with and appropriate other cultural and religious symbols and this leads the gospel to find new expressions that ultimately transform the plurality of religious identities (*Pacifica: Australasian Theological Studies* 14, No. 2 [June 1, 2001]: 205). In the current study, I have used the term interculturalism to describe a similar process at work in the multicultural community of the STM African Mass.

⁸⁰ Canada, “Canadian Multiculturalism Act” accessed March 8, 2017, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-18.7>

way of worship. We have our style of drumming, we love to dance, we shake our bodies, we love to sing and we are just a happy people that even when mass is over people still hang around. They don't want to go home, they stand around talking. So we thought it was important that [we] not lose that.

He also added that the core value of STM African Mass is to promote inculturation in worship:

To promote African culture, inculturation in our way of worship, and also to ensure that brethren have a place where they gather and bring together the sense of African oneness. It is not just inculturation but also African oneness, to unify that is why we encourage songs from different parts of Africa for us to learn. So, it is not just one country in Africa that is dominating, it is supposed to be a way for us to experience and enjoy have diversity in African context.

For some participants, Catholic faith is already fused with their culture (“inculturated”). For example, Brother D explained at length:

Ah, the worship of the, like the worship of God through the Catholic tradition that I know it fits well, fits well with our own culture. My own indigenous tribal culture the way it is before Christianity or Catholicism ever reached my part of Ghana so the Catholic Church fits well with it I just say in two ways. We believe a lot in spirits and as I said my grandfather was a traditional believer. He did the animal offering and there was the fetish priest who during the animal offering and there are kinds of things that he would want, or he would ask, so that there would be rain so that when the rain comes the crops do well. And so that it rains fresh vegetation grows and grasses around there cows can't come eat it. Okay in addition to that year when there will be new young men getting married, they will be blessed with children and these are some of the things in which in prayer Catholics ask for. Okay but another thing then is ah like the material part, okay material part is people are physical, we eat physical food, we live in physical houses so the person is there. With physical body that means should be maintained and nourished. And so it can (laughs) host the soul or the spirit better, I think the Catholic Church has good philosophy on that. Catholics had schools which educated, Catholics' church had schools that educated my parents and then ah their generation, us and our generation, the hospitals that was there you know for treating children and for like antenatal and pregnant women. Okay so if you want ah, to worship and to be spiritual close to God and you know he is giving you a physical body in which your spirit resides on everything there goes to the spirit to offer that benefits physical body. Now I somehow noticed the difference earlier between the Catholic Church and other churches. And one way is this that in other churches, they say that the worship of God is to be centred and focused on Jesus and nothing else. However in my culture ancestors are very important if you had a grandmother on Sundays you just remember them and bury them close to home sometimes in the compound house well. Ah, I think that the fact that we remember things, our good people and know they relate in this way is we could believe if we can understand how exactly

they live while being human. I think is important so because I learnt earlier on that Protestants are against it in some ways which may be genuine ah because truly the central person is Jesus. But some way completely I felt the need to look out to be good at so (laughs) so in my culture there is a lot of that yeah. Look out too and be good at ... yeah. So like that I always feels that Catholic Church is the place that fits, me was brought up in faith and my culture. One time though we got talking about I had this conversation when I was undergraduate with one of my professors, he made a good point that the origin of the Christianity itself tend to make other religions look bad because precisely positions itself as the only true religion and so that others are not and so when people are converting from one religion to another then that means what you had originally was bad and now you want to get is better. You get the image that tends to make the African person, an indigenous African person looks like evil.

Chupungco defines liturgical inculturation as “a process of inserting the texts and rites of liturgy into a framework of the local culture.”⁸¹ This means, he adds, “liturgy and culture share the same pattern of thinking, speaking, and expressing themselves through rites, symbols, and artistic forms.”⁸² In the STM African Catholic Mass, much has been inculturated in relation to the liturgy. This is clearly seen in the African songs sung by the congregation, accompanied by African musical instruments, dancing and all kinds of movement involved during worshipping, the singing of mass by the African priests, the prayers of faithful offered in song. Some participants claim that these elements connect them to their faith, help them to keep it, and to continue to relate to their home cultures. Rich said,

Yeah as I mentioned previously our singing, our songs most of them are in our traditional African local languages. We have very lively ... masses, we dance, the preaching or the sermon itself is really Soul searching, it's entertaining and we are each other's, keepers. We are not isolated, no, you know, we are not that isolated and stuff like that.

Joel added, “One unique thing is singing. It is very unique thing as well as dancing because Canadian culture, for example, everything is done in a very solemn [way], you know but for us, we see it as true celebration that everybody is invited to dance, to clap our hands, we beat the drums, and we sing aloud. So, those are some of the key unique things.”

1.7. Thesis organization

This study focuses on the ways in which the Catholic Church, through the STM African Mass, helps African newcomers to Saskatoon to adapt and settle into Canadian society. The

⁸¹Ibid., 30.

⁸²Ibid.

present chapter introduces the study topic and the case study method. The chapter also explains in depth the research methods the study employs and the conceptual frameworks applied. It also describes the research subjects and demographic information relevant to the participants.

Chapter Two reviews the literature on this topic, especially pertaining to the challenges to integration faced by African newcomers in Canada. It also investigates the role of religion in adaptation and identifies the strengths and limitations of previous research.

Chapter Three explores in depth the case study of the St. Thomas More African Catholic Community by describing how the community originated, the members, leaders and its progress to date. The chapter also briefly discusses the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Saskatoon and its relevance to the origin and development of the STM African Mass.

Chapter Four focuses on the interviews conducted with the members of STM African Catholic community. The findings are presented with reference to the main research questions of the study.

Chapter Five examines in depth the discussion of the findings especially focusing on the conceptual framework of the study. It also identifies unexpected or novel findings arising out of the study.

Finally, Chapter Six summarizes the conclusions of the study, makes some recommendations of relevance to the Catholic Church in Saskatoon, policymakers, and the STM African Catholic community, and identifies further areas of study arising from the research.

1.8 On self-positioning

My interest in studying the role of Catholic Church in the adaptation of African newcomers has its roots in my identity as a Catholic Christian, a fully professed nun, and my experiences as a Religious Studies student. Raised in a Catholic family in Eastern Kenya, I was taught the importance of faith and how to nurture it. During my childhood, I was taught the importance of praying together as a family and in the church, which we regard as a bigger family that we are part of. This also coincided very well with my consecration to religious life which emphasizes communal and personal prayers and community living. In my family, I was encouraged to go to church every Sunday and any other day of obligation when mass was offered in my local church. My religiosity can be traced back to my childhood when I attended Sunday school services. I later became a Sunday school teacher as a youth and a youth leader. I was

introduced to many devotions in the Catholic Church and I belonged to the Legion of Mary and Sacred Heart movements as a youth;⁸³ every day we had something to do in the church, such as devotional prayers, church-cleaning, small Christian community group, youth meetings or choir practice. I came to know about religious life when I was in high school; some sisters from different congregations visited us regularly and explained the religious life. After high school, being committed to my Christian life, I attended a Sunday school teachers' seminar where I encountered different sisters from different congregations. It was my first meeting with an Assumption Sister of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Nairobi who explained their way of life to us. At that time, I felt that the Holy Spirit manifested to me the will to serve God as a religious woman and I was filled with unspeakable joy. I started my journey of discernment and I was admitted to the religious order of the Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Nairobi. During my formation to religious life, I was introduced to a deeper understanding of Christian life and Catholic Church as a whole, commitment to vowed life, and the mission of Christ.

After taking my first vows, my first apostolate was a pastoral care ministry which I embraced gladly. I was much involved in many different activities taking place in the church like conducting services on Sunday and ministering the Holy Eucharist to the faithful, among others. As a temporary professed sister, I was enrolled in the Catholic University of Eastern Africa to study Religious Studies. There, I was exposed to a deeper understanding of world religions and African traditional religion. As a student in the Religious Studies program, I learnt about the necessity of separating personal beliefs from scholarship on religion. In addition, my experience in the Department of Linguistics and Religious Studies at the University of Saskatchewan has further enhanced my academic study of religion, especially on the necessity of separating personal beliefs from scholarship on religion.

⁸³The Legion of Mary is a Catholic movement devoted to Mary Immaculate. Members hold meetings weekly, praying the rosary together, along with Legion prayers, spiritual reading and, discussion. There are personal prayers that each member is supposed to pray every day. The members participate in activities such as visitation of families and the sick, both in their homes and in hospitals, maintaining cleanliness in the church, visiting prisoners and the elderly, to mention just a few. Members serve the church and all people on voluntary basis. The Sacred Heart is another Catholic devotion, started by Sr. Margaret Mary Alacoque, a French nun, in the 17th century. The Sacred Heart of Jesus represents the divine love which God has for humanity. Members have daily prayers and commit themselves to attend Holy Mass and receiving Holy Communion frequently. Members renew their consecration every first Friday of the month.

When I had to choose a topic for the course work and thesis, I decided to study the role of the Catholic Church in African immigrants' adaptation to Saskatoon, a case study of the St. Thomas More College African Catholic Community Mass. I was interested to know whether African newcomers' perceptions have shifted with regard to religion after moving to Canada, and the extent to which the availability of culturally appropriate worship opportunities in the Catholic Church has facilitated their adaptation to Canadian society. I wanted to know whether they have the same commitment to their religiosity after moving to Saskatoon.

I am aware that my identity as a Catholic religious nun, an African newcomer, and a participant in the STM African Mass may be seen as a bias factor that may affect the credibility of my research and my status as an academic. Recognizing this, I have attempted to look beyond my personal religious commitment and my participation in the African Mass. More importantly, I aspire to be guided in my research not by my beliefs and assumptions but by the theories, methods, and scholarly principles of investigation as developed in the discipline of Religious Studies and other disciplines in today's academia. This research is not in any way intended to be an apologetic work in favour of the STM African Catholic Community. My task is to interpret collected data about the role the Catholic Church plays in adaptation of African immigrants in Saskatoon following the requirements of academic Religious Studies.

As an insider in this research, however, I have some advantages in collecting data with STM African Catholic members. First, my status as a nun helped me to grasp the situation more concretely than I might have in the absence of this commitment. Second, recruiting the informants to assist in getting other participants for interview was easier and facilitated the research process of identifying potential project participants. Finally, my close connection with members of STM African Catholic Community has made it easier to get good quality data. For my research study, I made good use of these advantages in collecting the data. I could collect research data during the day and even in the evening depending on the availability of the members, which an outsider might not have achieved. This provided continuity in the collection of the research data which in turn made it possible to collect more detailed and more versatile, hence more trustworthy, research data.

The STM African Mass members who participated in the data collection process were my fellow worshippers, most of them being choir members, as I am. Thus, during the data collection, my requests were almost never rejected, while an outsider in such a study might have

experienced rejection. My colleagues showed respect to me and my research by sharing their time and knowledge with me voluntarily. It was surprising to see members of the STM African Catholic Community coming to me and asking whether I needed more participants when I already had the number required. I remember one person who is not Catholic who, when I told her about my study, told me, “please conduct the interview with me right now and I will send my daughter to you who is a student in the university so that you may interview her.” I had to explain to her that the interview was limited to the Catholics who attend the STM African Mass. I also conducted a telephone interview with one participant, who had travelled to another province and she explained that she didn’t want to miss the opportunity to participate in the interview. The participants were very anxious to participate in this study; some explained how happy they were with this kind of interview because it gave them an opportunity to share or process the experiences they have encountered in Saskatoon. Some others added that this research is an opportunity to popularize the STM African Catholic Community Mass in Saskatoon. As noted above, the participants had the opportunity to review their transcribed data and make changes where needed and gave me permission to use the data as required. This also enhanced the trustworthiness of the research data. The fact that the participants were able to reach me due to my insider status also provided them with the opportunity to consult me regarding the questions they did not understand. My awareness of my status as insider should be seen as an indication that I fully realized the necessity to suspend my own views and biases while pursuing an academic study of a community whose faith I share.

The next chapter discusses the literature review. It highlights what has been done with regard to immigrants, the challenges to integration faced by the newcomers and the role of religion in helping newcomers.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter reviews the secondary literature on challenges to the integration of immigrants in Canada and the role of religion in newcomer adaptation. This chapter identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the research literature, and highlights areas that need further research.

2.1 Challenges to Integration

In his book, *Different Gods: Integrating Non-Christian Minorities into a Primarily Christian Society*,¹ Raymond Breton examines the processes involved in the integration of immigrants. He argues that the newcomers and minorities may find that some members of the established community maintain a social distance from them, that they face rejection and hostility.² This concurs with what Gillian Creese discusses in her book, *The New African Diaspora in Vancouver: Migration, Exclusion and Belonging*³ about the experiences of immigrants from countries in sub-Saharan Africa who have settled on Canada's west coast. She highlights that these immigrants, despite their various national origins, are actively engaged in creating a new collective "African Community" within their adopted homeland.⁴ Creese reveals that "racial and gender discrimination, social isolation (exclusion), and the devaluing of foreign educational credentials by potential employers often contribute to downward mobility for African immigrants."⁵ She shows how African immigrants negotiate these challenges and forms of exclusion while at the same time creating new spaces of belonging, community and collective identity.⁶ The African immigrants do this through the creation of formal and informal support networks, shared experiences, businesses, organizations, social, and cultural activities which help them to overcome the challenges.⁷ To have a more satisfying working life they also pursued

¹ Raymond Breton, *Different Gods: Integrating Non-Christians Minorities into a Primarily Christian Society* (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 181.

² Ibid.

³ Gillian Creese, *The New African Diaspora in Vancouver: Migration, Exclusion, and Belonging* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 10.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 61.

⁶ Ibid., 9.

⁷ Ibid., 230.

further education in Canada; as Creese and Wiebe observe, “Pursuing Canadian education was a central strategy followed.”⁸

Similarly, John Frazier et al. have examined the extent to which the African diaspora in Canada has been incorporated into the mainstream of Canadian society. His study highlights that “racial inequality, unemployment rates, income inequality, educational attainment, occupational inequality, residential segregation, and home ownership rates were barriers to full incorporation into Canadian society.”⁹ In addition, Joseph Mensah points out that, with respect to the Ghanaian community in Canada, most live in the suburban districts of Toronto, mainly because of their need for affordable public and private rental accommodation and their desire to live close to other Ghanaians. Like most Black groups in Toronto, Ghanaians have high unemployment rates, and are employed in low-paying, manual, processing, and machining occupations in the manufacturing industry.¹⁰ Breton further identifies areas that need more research, for instance, “whether the factors and processes involved in the integration of minorities are the same when the religion is the same as that of the mainstream society.”¹¹

Creese discusses at length how African immigrants in Vancouver, like most immigrants of colour, quickly discover that local labour market practices restrict rather than facilitate the entry of newcomers, limiting them to low-level and low-paid jobs that are of less interest to other Canadians. Africans experience barriers that constitute a process of deskilling skilled immigrant workers such as the demand for Canadian work experience, the demand for Canadian educational credentials, and demand for a local Canadian accent.¹² Similarly, in his dissertation, Benard Chuba argues that “Newcomer immigrants lack the Canadian work experience, also referred to as soft skills or labour market cultural capital.”¹³ Creese further observes that “the demand for Canadian educational credentials, and the skills, aptitudes, capabilities, and experiences that potential employees bring with them to Canada, ... serve to systematically

⁸ Gillian Creese and Brandy Wiebe, “Survival Employment’: Gender and Deskilling among African in Canada” *International Migration* 50, no. 5 (July 2009): 66.

⁹ John Frazier, Joe Barden, and Norah Henry, eds., *The African Diaspora in the U.S.A and Canada at the dawn of the 21st century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 33.

¹⁰ Joseph Mensah, “Doing Religion Overseas: The Characteristics and Functions of Ghanaian Immigrant Churches in Toronto, Canada,” *Societies Without Borders* 4, no.1 (January 2009): 27.

¹¹ Breton, *Different Gods*, 181.

¹² Creese, *The New African Diaspora in Vancouver*, 69.

¹³ Benard Chuba, “Perceptions of Job Satisfaction and Over-Qualification among African Immigrants” (*East Eisenhower Parkway: ProQuest LLC*, 2016), 21, accessed September 4, 2016, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1798489551/>

deskill African immigrants while reaffirming their non-Canadianness and pushing them into insecure, low-wage survival jobs that mark the transition out of their former middle- or upper-class social locations.”¹⁴

Another challenge identified by many researchers is the language barrier. Chuba laments that “It cannot be gainsaid that language skill is quintessential for success in the labour market. African-trained immigrants whose mother tongue is neither English nor French find it even harder to avoid over-qualification and job mismatch.”¹⁵ In addition, Pei Hua Lu et al., in a study of Asian newcomers, notes that the significant barriers to achieving a good quality of life include socio-economic factors, as many of the recent immigrants of his study were under- or precariously-employed. English language proficiency is a significant barrier to economic integration.¹⁶ The participants in his study express frustration and anxiety about the language barriers they encounter and how it inhibits their own employment opportunities. So they mostly work in menial jobs such as washing dishes in a restaurant.¹⁷ Similarly, Creese agrees that language causes Africans to be discriminated against in the job market. She states that the main problem was the African English accent which is portrayed as inferior to the local variant and inadequate for performance as competent Canadians.¹⁸ She adds, “African immigrants experienced accent discrimination as an ongoing problem that created significant barriers to belonging in the local community.”¹⁹ Similarly, Creese and Wiebe agree that the central barrier to professional employment was accent “discrimination as a reality of life in Vancouver, and it clearly affected their ability to get jobs in professional fields.”²⁰ In addition, Mensah laments that “a common complaint by many Black continental African immigrants in Canada concerns how their African accent ‘conveniently’ becomes impossible for some Whites to understand when it is not in the interest of Whites to hear these Africans out; but somehow the reverse becomes the case whenever these same Africans have money in hand, ready to purchase goods and services

¹⁴Creese, *The New African Diaspora in Vancouver*, 69.

¹⁵ Chuba, “Perceptions of Job Satisfaction,” 21.

¹⁶ Pei Hua Lu, Sugandhi del Canto, Nazeem Muhajarine, Peter Kitchen, Bruce Newbold, James Randall, Allison Williams and Kathi Wilson, “Quality of Life of Immigrants: Integration Experiences among Asian Immigrants in Saskatoon,” *Engaged Scholar Journal: Community-Engaged Research, Teaching and Learning. University of Saskatchewan* 1, no. 2 (2015): 144.

¹⁷ Ibid., 138-139.

¹⁸ Creese, *The New African Diaspora in Vancouver*, 42.

¹⁹ Ibid., 48.

²⁰ Creese and Wiebe, “Survival Employment,” 65.

from White businesses.”²¹ Pei Hua Lu et al. point out that similarly, racialized Asian immigrants encounter social barriers as they settle into their local neighbourhoods. He observes that even if immigrants are willing to become fully integrated into the mainstream society the degree of openness of those in the mainstream remains debatable (both the residents and newcomers), although immigrants will adapt to mainstream society after a reasonable length of residence in the host country.²²

According to a study done at the University of Waterloo, the city of Waterloo’s population consists largely of visible minorities. Nearly a quarter of the Waterloo Region’s population is made up of immigrants. Though the report does not identify the kinds of immigrants living in Waterloo, it is assumed that Africans also live in this community. The study noted that in this community, there are some members who feel that they belong (they felt happy, content, relaxed, included, valued and accepted) while others feel that they are defined as “the other” (due to lack of identity, exclusion, English as their second language and withdrawal).²³ In conclusion, “the community has a hope for the future that, as a younger generation matures, there will be a more global outlook and acceptance of all types of people, which will be the key to an inclusive, integrated, welcoming and sustainable community thus deepening the sense of belonging.”²⁴

Fil Fraser discusses how different African people have contributed to the Canadian economy, for example, through academic and entrepreneurial skills. Several African-initiated organizations in Canada help Africans to settle and adapt to new environments. For example, “the African Diaspora Association of Canada was co-founded in 2005 by a combined effort of South African and Ethiopian Diaspora organizations—the South African Rainbow Association of Ottawa and the Association of Higher Education and Development.”²⁵ These organizations have played a major role in African lives, for they have “fostered value-added contributions to Canadian society, and aimed to form sustainable partnerships that directly benefit deserving

²¹Joseph Mensah, “Black Continental African Identities in Canada: Exploring the Intersections of Identity Formation and Immigrant Transnationalism,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 48, no.3 (Fall 2014): 17.

²² Pei Hua Lu et al., “Quality of Life of Immigrants,” 142.

²³University of Waterloo, “We Can Design Belonging: Final Report for the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation, Community Edition,” accessed January 3, 2016, <https://uwaterloo.ca/Canadian-index-wellbeing/sites/ca.canadian...PDF> file, 2013, 15.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

²⁵ Abel Chikanda, Jonathan Crush, and Margaret Walton-Roberts, eds., “Diaspora, Development and Governance,” *International Organization for Migration (IOM), Global Migration No.5* (2016): 74, accessed April 15, 2016, <https://books.google.ca/books?isbn=3319221655>.

(according to the scope of the organization) African communities in Africa and Canada.”²⁶ These organizations have set goals in order to make lives of Africans both in Canada and back home in Africa valuable and more meaningful. The goals include “poverty reduction, advancement of human rights, gender equality, promoting peace and social justice, and [the organization] unites many other groups working under and outside of the African Diaspora Association of Canada”²⁷ (e.g., Agona Association of Canada, Sudanese Association of Ottawa among others), to create positive experiences for immigrants as they adjust to their lives away from home.²⁸

On April 25, 2005, the Canadian African diaspora community held a forum at the National Library and Archives in Ottawa, attended by more than 160 people including diplomats, academics, representatives of international relief organizations, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and other religious and community organizations.²⁹ The forum was organized by the South African High Commission, Association for Higher Education and Development (AHEAD) and South African Rainbow Association–Ottawa (SARA-O). The aim of the forum was to heighten awareness of the role the African Diaspora can play in improving the quality of life for African communities and in mobilizing needed resources from the Diaspora, the Canadian Government, and NGOs for the purpose of confronting the challenges of development in Africa.³⁰ This could be a way of giving back to the continent what has been lacking. The participants were urged to explore creative and inspiring ways to assist in the rebuilding of Africa and to reverse the brain drain to brain gain.³¹ The emphasis was placed on the fact that the Canadian African Diaspora is a dynamic and vital link between Africa and Canada that can assist as a valuable intellectual, political and economic resource.³² This support could be effected through skills transfer, development investment and mobilization to institutions. The African diaspora community could also help immigrants to “contribute to the integration of African immigrants, providing material

²⁶ Fil Fraser, *How the Blacks Created Canada* (Canada: Dragon Hill, 2009), 192.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ African Diaspora Community Forum, “African Diaspora in Canada: Improving the Quality of Life for Africa: A Response to Africa’s Brain Drain,” Ottawa, April 25, 2005, Report of the Proceedings, 3, accessed June 6, 2016. www.aheadonline.org/wp-content/.../African-Diaspora-Community-Forum-Report.pdf

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 4.

³² Ibid.

assistance, counselling, facilitating family reunification, and helping out economically.”³³

2.2 The Role of Religion in Newcomer Adaptation

Breton critically analyses the role of religion in the “evolution of the journey undertaken by immigrants by examining the concerns of the experience of being uprooted from one social world and transplanted into another.”³⁴ He notes that “the transplantation experience can entail a cultural disorientation, insecurity about one’s identity, and a loss of control over one’s life. The transplantation also entails establishing roots into the society of adoption—a process that may meet some resistance and even opposition.”³⁵ He claims that “Religion can play a significant role in helping newcomers cope with the crucial experience of being uprooted from [one] social world and transplanted into another. It can provide significant resources to help newcomers cope with the cultural disorientation, identity insecurity, and loss of control of their lives that the transplantation entails.”³⁶ Similarly, speaking of Vancouver, Creese observes that “the growth of African churches is one visible sign of the growing web of social networks and institutional structures within the new African diaspora as it carves out a community in Vancouver. These African churches have become the frontline of settlement support, providing informal support to new immigrants and referring new arrivals to the range of services available at immigrant settlement service agencies and local schools and community centres.”³⁷

African immigrants seek a sense of belonging through different networks, for as Creese acknowledges, “most networks connected to religious institutions in Vancouver were diverse and multiethnic.”³⁸ She observes that churches are primary sites of developing friendships and support networks outside of the African community that are communities for carving out a stronger sense of belonging. For many Africans, faith was a central anchor that provided a community of acceptance and inclusion while they were facing exclusion and marginalization on so many other fronts.³⁹

In his recent doctoral dissertation, Kevin Driver argues that many churches in rural

³³ Ibid., 6.

³⁴ Breton, *Different Gods*, 11.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 169.

³⁷ Creese, *The New African Diaspora in Vancouver*, 215; The African churches Creese is talking about are protestant churches, for she puts emphasis on the African churches which means they are not mission churches, for instance, the Catholic Church. These can be termed as African-initiated churches. She adds that on in 2010, they identified twelve churches which can be defined as African churches and all have African pastors (215).

³⁸ Ibid., 214.

³⁹ Ibid.

Canada are uniquely positioned to be on the frontline in welcoming and creating that sense of belonging between established residents and newcomers.⁴⁰ Driver, a minister in Banff, Alberta, leads a church that specializes in outreach programs to newcomers to Canada. There, they carry out different activities each month. These activities allow the cultivation of relationships among the members, and the visitors who join them gain a sense of being welcomed and belonging to Canadian society.⁴¹ Church members' decision to embrace and welcome immigrants enables easier integration. Driver concludes that "Churches that are intentionally responsive to immigrant needs will be successful in the integration of newcomers."⁴² He adds that "Churches create a sustained safe space to nurture, share, and appreciate each other by providing opportunities for each to connect on various social levels."⁴³

Connor Philip in his study "Immigrant Religion in Canada: Disruption, Adaptation, and Facilitation" concluded that immigrant religious participation decreases after migration. With respect to adaptation to Canadian society, immigrant religious participation starts to resemble local religious participation after a period of three to ten years. Philip further notes that in the course of adaptation to Canadian society, first generation religious minorities appear to experience occupational penalties, but religious participation is associated with occupational mobility for the second generation.⁴⁴ Especially where a congregational religious field exists within a receiving society, religious participation has positive impacts on structural integration (such as occupational attainment) for the second generation.⁴⁵

A study by Boadi Agyekum and Bruce Newbold notes that Ghanaians, who are predominately Christian, and Somalis, who are predominantly Muslim, are among the largest Black African communities in Canada. They emphasize that for both groups, religion is an integral part of their lives. More importantly, religious place-making among immigrants has a

⁴⁰ Kevin Driver, "Welcoming and Belonging, Voice, Acceptance and Purpose," D. Min. Thesis, St Andrew College, Saskatoon, October 2015, ix.

⁴¹ Ibid., 15.

⁴² Ibid., 93.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Connor Philip, *Immigrant Religion in Canada: Disruption, Adaptation, and Facilitation*, Pew Research Center's in Forum on Religion and Public life (February 26, 2015), https://www.ciqss.org/sites/default/files/.../2012-04-04_Connor_Immigration.pdf.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 18.

bearing on their well-being and integration.⁴⁶ There are restorative effects in religious place as Agyekum and Newbold stress: “Focusing on religious places shows the centrality of place for achieving physical, social, emotional, mental and spiritual healing.”⁴⁷ They add that religious places such as churches and mosques provide avenues for people to interact with each other, promoting trust and solidarity between and among members. They claim that “positive interaction amongst people is likely to result in a positive sense of place or place attachment, which in turn, leads to positive health outcomes.”⁴⁸ They identified that further research is needed to gain insight into the mechanisms through which gender roles shape the relationship between religious sites and health.⁴⁹

Similarly, Mensah observes that most Black continental African immigrants in Canada are either Christian or Muslim. Due to racism in mainstream churches (the mission churches) and the desire to worship with people of their own background, African Christian newcomers mostly attend churches that are formed and populated mainly by Africans or Blacks (African Initiated Churches). Many Black continental African immigrant communities in Canada use their churches, mosques and other religious organizations for cultural reproduction and the provision of social services to facilitate the settlement process.⁵⁰ Ghanaians find it necessary to mobilize themselves in ethnic and religious associations to address their settlement and integration needs. He further explains how different churches in Toronto provide social services such as English as a Second Language class, marriage counselling, financial and legal assistance, conflict resolution, mentoring, sports and summer school programs for youth. These religious institutions and social services help Ghanaian members of religious communities to foster integration into Canadian society.

Conclusion

It is important to note that there are similarities that can be found in these previous studies done with the current study. For example, in connection with a study by Raymond Breton

⁴⁶Boadi Agyekum and Bruce K. Newbold, “Religion/Spirituality, Therapeutic Landscape and Immigrants’ Mental Well-being amongst African Immigrants to Canada,” *Journal of Mental Health, Religion and Culture* (September 2016): 2.

⁴⁷Ibid., 3.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Mensah, *Black Continental African Identities in Canada*, 18.

cited above (n. 2), the members of STM African community have experienced rejection within church and workplace, as interview participant Mama illustrated:

Racism is an issue even in church. I have had that discussion with some Africans like you come to church and you don't feel you are part of it. Because you are sitting in a pew with someone and they are moving away or you can't play with their kids and you are like what is this. That is why I am like even when I go to church I don't feel part of it. Is like, I have to go to church because I have to go to church. So now what I try to do is when I go, it is a mental thing for me, I just shut, I just block it. I don't even feel people are around me. In my head I feel I am the only one standing there, I don't even care about any person around, it's just me and my God that is the only way that I can focus spiritually. But if you just think about all those things you go to church and people will not get to know you, you like after mass you walk away nobody even cares. Nobody comes to interact with you, to know where you live, where you come from like. That is one thing I find with STM. I have to be honest, I stopped coming to mass here because of that I just feel that they are not welcoming right. St. Augustine is little better, they can do better than that.

In addition, the informants interviewed in this study echo Gillian Creese's observations (see n. 4 above): the members of the African Mass (and the Redeemed Church) are creating a new collective African community in Saskatoon. This is indicated by the fact that members of the STM African Mass feel comfortable interacting with other faith groups and are involved with events taking place at other churches. The members of STM African community have done all these things outlined by Creese; for instance, Brother D said, he has attended other churches for he believes they are part of the Christian family:

Ah (laughs) community, your fellow human persons. You know they are Christians and they just worship slightly different way and with understanding that the Christian family itself is large, ah. So, I see the things that I believe in they believe as well. The life that I try to live the same one they try to live and so there is still that unity though we go to different churches and so for us to be able to be closer and more cohesive we still learn more about our different ways of worship yeah. And one way it makes us know that ah the common thing is the greater part aspect to worship in different churches. And that the difference is more like style. Style for example I would be where a heart would star right on the forehead on where you are ultimate and may be moon like something like this. I mean friends try to discuss this so (laughs) something to be decent and to be saved and to live a good life. And to show to non-Christians that the Christians that is good only see how I live it. So that I go there because I believe that they are part of Christians and the difference between my church and theirs is just the style.

Participants in the STM African community agreed that that the African Mass offers an opportunity for integration, creation of friendship and a source of healing for them.⁵¹ The African Mass helps, noted Gozmok, “quite a lot ah just you know coming [to] African Mass like African Mass just like a community and you know you come you share experiences, we share information. So, yeah while I come here I meets African people maybe there is anything you know, share information between each other and if there is anything that they think you should know or that will help in life, that will help you settle down they are always, they are always open to help. So, I think they help in so many ways.” Ade Olu added, “Well the African Mass is helping because again it gives me a sense of community, with my folks, make friends with people from other part of Africa probably I would not have met.”

To conclude, this review of the relevant literature shows that much has been done to understand and analyse challenges to the integration of African newcomers to Canada. Some efforts have been made to show the role of religion in helping immigrants to settle in Canada. My research will make a distinctive contribution in the body of literature in the following contexts. First, it focuses intensively on the specific experience of a grassroots group of African Catholics, unlike other studies that focus on African immigrants in general. Second, it is based in the small, prairie city of Saskatoon, unlike most studies which focus on larger cities like Toronto or Vancouver. More importantly, it is an in-depth study of a specific African Catholic community that worships at STM as opposed to a broader sociological analysis. For instance; Creese notes, “churches were primary sites of broader integration as African immigrants’ forged connections across differences of race, ethnicity, and national origin.”⁵² Here, there is no clarification of which church she is discussing, it is not specific (e.g., Catholic or Protestant, large or small, new or established, African-oriented or traditional Canadian). In addition, she observes that Africans “seeking community in their church or mosque was a natural point of contact in a new location.”⁵³ Again, this is so general as to be a truism. This thesis also focuses specifically on the role of religion in newcomer adaptation. While some of the studies address involvement in religious organizations, they tend not to pay attention to the specifically religious (as opposed to social) dimensions of these organizations (e.g., worship, prayer, preaching, music, etc.). Most importantly, this investigates the inculturation of African Catholicism in the Canadian

⁵¹ See Agyekum and Newbold, “Religion/Spirituality.”

⁵² Creese, *New African Diaspora in Vancouver*, 215.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 214.

context, which makes it a unique study.

The next chapter focuses on the subject of the case study. It examines the history of the STM African Community Mass focusing on its pioneers, goals, mission, membership, the importance of the STM African community to its members, and its very significant relationship to the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Saskatoon.

Chapter Three

Case Study: The St. Thomas More College African Catholic Community Mass

Introduction

This chapter describes at length the history of the STM African Mass, its humble beginnings, its progress, and benefits to its members. It also discusses the Redeemed Christian Church of God and its relevance to the STM African Catholic Community.

3.1 History of STM African Catholic Community Mass

The African Mass, as it is called at STM, started on the first Sunday of May 2011. The African Mass was originally known as Mass for African Students as Joel, a Catholic priest, recalled. Recently, in November 2016, the name of the STM African Community Mass was changed to the “African-Canadian Catholic Community, Saskatoon” so that it can be inclusive of all members, African and non-African, who attend the Mass. The mass is held at 2:00 pm on the first (or second) Sunday of each month. It is celebrated by an African priest. Sisi Ghazi, also a priest, remembers that the African Mass was initiated by 10 African Catholic graduate students from the University of Saskatchewan. The five pioneer leaders included Dr. Cletus Asuquo, Collins Anochikwa, McDonald Donkuru, Anthony Olusola, and Dennis Okinyo. They approached Rev. Fr. Iheanyi Enwerem, O.P., who was at that time a sessional lecturer at St. Thomas More College, and Rev. Fr. Patrick Ampani, an associate pastor in one of the local parishes as well as a graduate student at St. Andrew’s College, Saskatoon. The two priests had meetings with the pioneer students where they came to an agreement to start a mass for African Catholic students. Deng Jok, a pioneer participant, notes that initially, the service was open only to African students because they were the concern at that time, but eventually many other people wanted to attend so it was opened to everyone, and even members of non-Catholic denominations were invited to come and worship. The members of the African Mass are still encouraged to invite their friends. Even those who are not Catholics attend the mass so as to have fellowship with fellow Africans.

According to Sisi Ghazi, the African Catholic Mass was conceived as a counterforce to the aggressive conversion-outreach to African newcomers by a local Nigerian-based Pentecostal church, the Redeemed Christian Church of God. The Redeemed Church targeted African students and, to meet their objective, they would position their members at the Saskatoon Airport between the months of May and September looking for newly arriving African students, which

they continue to do. After welcoming the students at the airport, church members would host them in their homes, help them settle down and take them to church on Sunday. They also offered them part-time jobs in their own businesses. In addition, Brother D reports that the church typically helped newcomers with finding accommodation and settling, and with acquiring initial basics such as clothing for winter wear. For a long time, the Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon had paid little attention to newly arriving African Catholic students. It was in response to the recruitment efforts of the Redeemed Christian Church of God that both the African Catholic graduate students and the two priests saw the need to offer African Catholics an opportunity to celebrate the Mass in an African way of worship.

When asked to describe the mission of the African Mass, Joel, a Catholic priest, emphasized the *catholicity* and *Africanness* of the service:

STM Mass cannot have a mission statement greater than that of the Catholic Church because what we do here is purely Catholic, there is nothing extraordinary, and there is nothing that is not within the context of the Catholic faith. So we do things within the context of African culture where we try to sing our hymns of our native languages, in our dialects, and try to beat the drums just to try to keep pace what we have been born with or the culture we grew up with.

Joel, a priest who presides at the Mass, describes its vision in terms of expressing and building African Catholic *identity* in an unfamiliar culture:

The vision of the African Catholic Community Mass involves building an African community through maintaining, retaining and sustaining African Catholic identity. This is because when you are in a new place, many times nobody will tend to hear your voice; when we come together, then we are able to make a voice, and make ourselves heard. It is not that we are crying out for anything but to build ourselves and to say we have an identity in the foreign land.

The main objective of the African Mass identified by Joel is to be “*missionaries*.” African newcomers think that once they come here they need to re-evangelize because, in comparison to African Catholic churches that are filled with the faithful, here in western countries the number of Catholic believers is few. Joel also adds another important objective:

[to] help African Catholic students to maintain their faith and most importantly to build an African community. We are able to have fellowship with one another, able to interact with one another and we are able to know ourselves and support one another. Because this is a foreign land and people can become too lonely even in a crowd. Being in a foreign land the culture is very different so when you meet with people who came from the same place or the same continent it gives some kind of consolation. Africans share things in common; whether one comes from Ghana,

Kenya, Sudan or whichever country, we are able to pray, we are able to understand ourselves more quickly than understanding the European or the American or the Canadian style of life. So when new students come they experience culture shock and they need somebody on ground who has been here, who has absorbed that culture shock to help them navigate their way to fit in, blend with Canadian culture, and the demands of the society.

Another key objective of the African Mass, as articulated by Ade Olu was to

Worship together as Christian Catholics by putting together a dimension to the inculturation of worship. Africans are people of very unique culture; we have our style of drumming, we love to dance, we shake our bodies, we love to sing and we are just a happy people that even when Mass is over people still hang around. They don't want to go home, they stand around talking. So we thought it was important not to lose that.

The core value of the African Catholic Community Mass as articulated by Joel is to “preach the good news about the kingdom of God to all men and women, and empowering our own African Catholic students to be evangelizers in this foreign land.”

Another core value was emphasized by a pioneer member, Ade Olu:

Promote African culture, inculturation in our way of worship, to ensure that brethren have a place where they gather, and bring together the sense of African oneness. To support African oneness and unity we encourage songs from different parts of Africa for us to learn, to experience, and enjoy, to have diversity in an African context. Another value is for students to hold to the sense of discipline they got from their background as they grew up and fit into Catholic faith discipline. So they don't lose their cultural values as well as the Catholic values when they are in the foreign land.

3.1.1 Membership

The members of the African Catholic Community number about 100. The majority are students. One disadvantage of the high proportion of student members for community-building is that once they graduate, they move on with their own lives; some move to different provinces or return to their home countries. The highest number in attendance at a single mass was 60 attendees in January 2016. Some African members are highly committed and attend the African Mass frequently, while others are not able to attend due to work commitments on Sunday afternoons. As noted above, members of the African Mass Community are encouraged to invite others to join in, as Fr. Joel explains,

People of all nationalities are invited to the African Mass whether they are Jamaicans, Americans (meaning everyone is welcomed), Canadians or any

nationality; any person is welcomed, but the key thing is that when they have their own members from Africa coming into new culture they try to help get them a place where they can rent, learn from one another and therefore, when one has the support of his/her own people the transition is easier or faster. So every member of the African Mass is eligible to invite everyone around to be part of the mass ... So members serve as agents to invite other African students who didn't know about it and build a community so that they become a support system for one another.

The earliest members of the African Mass were reached through text messages and emails; participating priests also asked their colleagues in diocesan meetings to tell the African members of their parishes about it. Most of the people at the African mass who are not students claim they got the information about it through their friends who are students in the university and belong to the African Mass, from announcements made in their parishes, and also from posters distributed to the parishes. Ade Olu, a pioneer member, recalled,

And we did a lot of hard work by way of reaching out one another, sending emails, identifying who Catholics are among the students and at some point about three years ago we came up with the idea of having posters to put at strategic places across the campus and the parishes, across the diocese. And again the priests Fr. Patrick and Fr. Enwerem continued to talk about this at the priests' meetings and that actually that gave it a momentum so eventually we began to see non-Africans, friends of Africans, Caucasian people coming for mass. And some of them really love it and some of them actually we gave African names for the purpose of coming to our mass.

It should be noted that since the African Mass takes place only once a month, many attendees also are parishioners in other local Catholic parishes.



Members after mass and sharing a meal together; during the liturgy⁵⁴

3.1.2 Contribution of the Diocese of Saskatoon

The African Catholic Community highly appreciates the support of the Diocese of Saskatoon. Initially, Bishop Don Bolen granted the permission to begin the African Mass. The graduate students and the two priests initiated it, but they had to seek the permission of the Diocese. Through the collaboration of the Diocese and STM College, they agreed that the African Catholic Community could use the College Chapel. The STM Chapel is accessible by most African newcomers. It is centrally located in the city, and easy to find and access. Many bus routes converge at the main campus bus stop.⁵⁵ The African Catholic community owes a significant debt of gratitude to the College for its support in providing everything needed for the celebration of mass, such as “altar bread and wine; we use their vessels and everything in the church which contributed in buying all those resources as a way of supporting us to grow in our spiritual life” (Fr. Joel). The members do not pay for the use of the chapel.

3.1.3 The African Priests

The STM African Catholic Community initially had two priests (Fr. Patrick Ampani and Fr. Iheanyi Enwerem) who initiated the idea. The two priests agreed to offer their services of celebrating mass for the African students on a voluntary basis. Later, three other priests joined them; Fr. Charles Nweze, Peter Ebidero, and Fr. Augustine Osei-Bonsu. Currently, five African priests come to celebrate mass. All belong to the Diocese of Saskatoon. In August 2016, two more African priests, Fr. Peter Olisa and Fr. Emmanuel Azike, joined the Diocese of Saskatoon and also occasionally preside at the African Mass. They continue to offer services voluntarily. The Community also invites other visiting African priests to preside at the African Mass.

⁵⁴ The photos used in this thesis were mostly taken by the researcher or were sent to the members of the African community electronically; in some cases, members sent photos directly to the researcher for her use. The researcher was granted permission to use photos by key participants in community events illustrated.

⁵⁵ Eight in all: 45/40 (Kenderdine/ Evergreen); 81/82 (Main Street/Centre Mall/ Taylor/Centre Mall); 6 (Preston/ Market Mall/ Broadway); 4 (Mayfair/Willowgrove) 50/55 (Lakeview/Lakeridge); 13 (Lawson Heights/ Broadway); 17 (Stonebridge); 18(College Park/ university); 28 (Willowgrove/Silverspring).



A priest being prayed for before going on vacation and during last blessings

3.1.4 Leadership

In addition to the priests, there are members who coordinate the mass and serve in eight leadership roles, held by 11 members. The leaders were chosen from among other members on a popular acclamation basis.⁵⁶ They meet on average four times a year but there is an ad hoc meeting in case a member is admitted to hospital, a moment of grieving, or a new birth, among any other issues that might occur. Different members have participated in the development of the African Catholic Community Mass in various capacities. The first group of the leaders has served the STM African Mass for period of six years. The outgoing committee is finishing its term by end of October 2017. The roles include coordinator, choir directors, sacristan, financial secretary, general secretary, communications person, hymn/song secretary, and social/welfare person. The incoming executive took up their responsibilities on November 1, 2016. There is gender imbalance in leadership roles. Out of 11 members, only two are female, while nine are male. The underlying reason for the gender imbalance offered by one of the leaders of the STM African Catholic community is that most women in the African Catholic community don't like taking the responsibilities and they have always an excuse for that.

3.1.5 The liturgy

The participants identified a lot of African elements that are integrated during mass. For example, during the liturgy there is chanting (as opposed to simple reading) of the Psalms, there is singing of praise and worship songs during preaching, and the priests go the extra mile of singing most parts of the mass instead of simply reciting them as is typical in a Canadian-style mass. The sermons are soul-touching and relevant to peoples' lives. The liturgy is enriched and

⁵⁶ Popular acclamation is a form of election that does not use a ballot.

made lively through singing and dancing. Music is largely drawn from different languages and cultures from various parts of Africa, accompanied by African musical instruments, such as drums, Djembe and peg drums, tambourines, Axatse, and *Kayamba*, among others.⁵⁷ Africans have different kinds of drums with different names depending on each ethnic group. The drums play an important role in every aspect of African life, including the physical, emotional and spiritual. African hand drums are played to communicate, celebrate, mourn and inspire. Traditionally drums were played in times of peace and war, planting and harvesting, birth and death. The quality of sound produced by the drums communicated the message intended to the particular community. Drums are inseparable from the African culture—they define it. As Jayne put it,

With us, the African worship you will find that we have different things, you know, the drums, the drums are a very important part of worship, even if we have the piano because pianos are not really available in most of the churches [in Africa]. So the drum is the most accessible one. And so that is a big part of, you know, using our voices that is a big part of it, you know, whether people are ululating or whatever, ah using what are they called, tambourines, yeah. I don't know the others the kayamba. So those kind of things just brings a sense of, you know, a sense of what enriches the whole experience, you know. And the ability to be able to sing in different languages here, we are able to sing in different languages.

She added, “To us Africans, movement is also is a big part of it, you know, using your body, your hands, your voice, to praise, you know praise is very different, it comes, you use you, you bring yourself to God so you use yourself to praise God in ways that you can. So to me, that's what the African Mass allows me to do, yeah.”

The first figure below is kind of shaker called Axatse used by the Ewe people of Ghana, and the second figure is a tambourine, the third is Maracas, next is kayamba. All these are kind of shakers and they are used to add flavour to church music. Next is Agogo bell, and different types of drums as illustrated.

⁵⁷ Djembe drum is a rope-tuned drum played with bare hands originally from West Africa. The djembe has a body carved from hardwood and a drumhead made of untreated rawhide most commonly made from goatskin (Djembe - Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Djembe>). Peg drum is kind of drum made of hardwood and with short intruding wood pegs and rope or strings attached to them and fastened to produce different sounds. Mostly the peg drums are used in West Africa. Africans have different kinds of drums with different names depending on each ethnic group; Kayamba is a musical instrument mostly used in East Africa played by shaking using both hands especially Kenya; Axatse is a rattle or idiophone of Ghana. It is constructed by hollowing out gourd. Then beads are attached to it with some string which is woven around it in a fishnet style design. (Axatse Gourd Rattles - African Rattles Of The Ewe - African Music Safari www.african-music-safari.com > Percussion Instruments.) It adds colour to the music.



Axatse (West Africa)



Tambourine



Maracas



Kayamba- East Africa



Agogo bell



Djembe drum (West Africa)



Peg drum (West Africa)



Udu drum (Nigeria)

3.1.6 Social and Community Life

After the celebration of the mass, the community takes time to socialize and sometimes share a meal together. Mass participant Rich observes, “After our STM African Mass we all

gather together, we greet each other and share ideas. So, you know with that culture that was brought back home where we know that Sunday is a day of worship, a day of thanksgiving, a day of praise, you know, we as Africans we have always live in that culture and that is what really motivates me to be this part of STM African Mass.” As a community, Joel reflects, members try to

Identify with people especially during the moments of loss, moments of sickness, moments of difficulties; we try to identify what could be done in helping the individual and, if it is a sad situation, so take for example when one of the members lost his baby, shortly after the birth we were there, supported him in every way possible. We couldn’t take away the pain but at least he knew that he was not alone, not worried, that he had a community or they had people around who would care for them to support them at a difficult moment like that. When somebody is sick as well [we] try, the most important thing is for us is to get known in the community. And when people graduate equally we try to celebrate them. So those are some of the ways we try to support one another. In addition, members try to incorporate social functions like organizing barbecue’s and sometimes we organize a little potluck just to come together to have moments to interact, on a very normal ground without any religious attachment to it. Some of those help us to use our social life.

3.2 The Redeemed Christian Church of God

The Redeemed Christian Church of God is crucial in this study for several reasons. First, the STM African Catholic Community Mass came to existence as a response to this Protestant church’s “poaching” of African Catholic students who arrived in Saskatoon. The Redeemed Church of God was so accommodating to African Catholic students that some of them left their Catholic faith and joined the Protestant church. The founders of the STM community thus saw the need to have an African Catholic Mass to celebrate their faith in an African way. The appeal of the Redeemed Church for African newcomers is in large part due to its offer of a form of worship that features African songs of praise and worship, drumming, and dancing. The Protestant church also fosters a sense of community and belongingness by sharing African meals and community based activities, which gives space for African newcomers and settled immigrants to interact after the church service. The Redeemed Church also offers activities that encourage youth participation such as soccer. Significantly, at the time the STM community was founded, the Redeemed Christian Church of God met in the chapel of the College of Emmanuel and St. Chad on the University of Saskatchewan campus, a short walk from the St. Thomas More College Chapel.

In order to gather more information, I interviewed the Pastor of the Redeemed Church of

God in Saskatoon on June 22, 2016, at his home. He provided a somewhat different perspective on what goes on in his church with respect to African newcomers. The pastor observed that “The Redeemed Church is a worldwide church and found in 157 countries in the world.” He added, “It is a Pentecostal church (emphasis on preaching the gospel), and an evangelical church as well.”⁵⁸ He noted that in Saskatoon, the church started in November 2003, in one room that the Pastor had rented and it was named Redeemed Christian Church of God Jesus House for All Nations. By January 2004, the number of members had increased and they approached the University of Saskatchewan to see if they could rent the then-unoccupied Emmanuel chapel. The church was registered officially with the provincial government in January 2004. The pastor states that “Jesus House of All Nations is the first Redeemed Church in Saskatchewan and it has given birth to 13 parishes. There are five parishes in Saskatoon (Grace Sanctuary Parish Saskatoon in Hanselman village, Seed Life Downtown 20th Street, Lighthouse Parish Sutherland area, and French Parish Saskatoon at St. George Avenue). In addition, there are four churches in Regina, one in Prince Albert, one in Moose Jaw, one in Lloydminster, and one in Warman.” The Redeemed Church Jesus House for all Nations focused their ministry on university students. They were ministering and reaching out to the students. This is because one of the things that scared the Pastor when he came to Canada was that during the students’ orientation they were being handed packets of condoms as part of their orientation materials. He wondered, “I was like, what kind of country is this, why this, these are young students, what are they teaching young students by giving them condoms?” And it just came to the Pastor’s mind that this university needed deliverance; that is why their focus when they started was university students.

The Redeemed Church Jesus for All Nations renders the following spiritual services to the church members at their church on Broadway Avenue, according to the Pastor: “Sunday service: they have three regular Sunday services; secondly, mid-week service on Wednesday for bible study and they have night vigil prayers on Fridays. In addition, they have prayer meetings

⁵⁸ Pentecostalism is a renewal movement within Protestant Christianity that places special emphasis on a direct personal experience of God through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The term Pentecostal is derived from Pentecost, the Greek name for the Jewish Feast of Weeks. For Christians, this event commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the followers of Jesus Christ, as described in Acts 2 (Pentecostalism - Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pentecostalism>); John Gordon Melton (Evangelical Church Protestantism Britannica.com, accessed December 3, 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Evangelical-church-Protestantism>) defines Evangelical churches as churches that stress the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, personal conversion experiences, and scripture as the sole bases for faith, along with active evangelism (the winning of personal commitments to Christ).

every day, Monday to Friday, by phone. In addition, they have choir practices, and every month Weekend of Wonders (Thanksgiving), starting with a Friday night prayer vigil where everybody is involved.” Lastly, they have March for Jesus which is a yearly event whereby the church members have a parade “for Jesus” throughout the city. According to the Pastor, onlookers witness that “these people are not afraid of the gospel of Christ. This is the church I want to be.”

The Redeemed Church offers several non-spiritual activities that help to keep their members involved. For instance, the church has a soccer team in the Saskatoon Soccer League. They also have other athletic activities like the Redeemed Christian Church of God Olympics where all the parishes in Saskatchewan send athletes once a year. They also have a cultural event called A Taste of Africa. The Pastor explained, “It is a way of promoting African culture, the image of Africa, the meaning of African food. It is a night of praise and worship, afterward a movie of African meals, display of African culture, and African dressing.” He added that the church offers scholarship schemes for members and they help people in terms of welfare. They have gender-specific programming for women and men.

Most of the church’s non-religious activities are self-financed; for instance, the Pastor observed, “For Taste of Africa they sell tickets and each African country represented in the church will provide a meal. ... Other activities are supported by donations.” The Redeemed Church is in the process of building an orphanage and resettlement centre. And every member of the church has a responsibility to raise funds for the centre. The main purpose of the centre will be to assist newcomers of all nationalities who come to the country to have a place to settle for one to three months until they get a job and they are able to rent a place. Their next project for the year 2020 is building a new church and auditorium.

The members who attend the Redeemed Church are about 85% Africans from different parts of Africa such as Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Namibia, Cameroon, Somalia, among others. About 15% of the members are non-African Canadians, and about 80% are students.

3.3 Differences between STM African Mass and the Redeemed Church of God

The Redeemed Church of God has had more than 13 years to establish itself in Saskatoon. In contrast, the STM African Mass started only in 2011 and was initiated basically for African Catholic students to have an opportunity to pray and worship as a community in the African Catholic way, as an alternative to the attractions of the Redeemed Church. The STM

Community cannot provide some of the activities the Redeemed Church of God is able to offer, because of limited membership and financial limitations, since the majority of members are students with little money; also the STM African Community must work within the framework of the Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

Despite these limitations, the STM African Mass is very important to its members because it offers a distinctive mode of Catholic worship similar to worship back in Africa. The members find this worship more enriching, nourishing, and fulfilling than standard Canadian Catholicism since they are able to bring the beauty of the cultural heritage of each country into worship, something which the Redeemed Church of God, which is dominated by Nigerians, cannot offer to its members.

Another important aspect of the uniqueness of the STM Community is the African Catholic choir. The members learn and assimilate many songs from different African countries with different languages and dialects. This gives the STM choir an enhanced sense of ownership and belonging to the Catholic (“universal”) Church, something which is different from the Redeemed Church, where the majority of members are from Nigeria and the songs are Nigerian based.

Another key difference between the STM African and the Redeemed Church of God is sacramental life. The Catholic Church is rich with sacraments, especially the sacraments of Baptism, the Holy Eucharist, Matrimony, and Reconciliation. STM renders services to members according to individual need. Newborns are baptized, whereas in the Redeemed Church they are dedicated to God; the STM members have the opportunity to receive Holy Eucharist every day, but for the Redeemed Church, Eucharist is celebrated only once a month; the sacrament of Reconciliation (“confession”) can be received any time members feel they need to repent, renew, and restore their relationship with God through a priest, while the Redeemed believe that reconciliation is between individual and God alone. Above all, for Catholics, the Holy Mass is celebrated in remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the redemption of humankind, the highest form of prayer for Catholic faithful. The STM African Mass has several African priests who preside at the holy mass, while in the Redeemed Church there is only one pastor. And there are also Reverend Sisters (African nuns) who attend the STM African Mass, but Redeemed does not have the call to religious life but only the anointing of the pastors. Thus, the mode and meaning of worship is significantly different for the African Catholics and the members of the

Redeemed Church; from a Catholic standpoint, the Redeemed Church services may be appealing and entertaining, but not a substitute for the Catholic sacraments.

Conclusion

The chapter explains the core of the research, the case study of STM African Catholic Community and the rival Redeemed Christian Church of God. The chapter has explained how the STM African Catholic Mass came to existence in Saskatoon, from its humble beginnings and gradual growth (from 20 to about 100), and from two priests to seven. This chapter also explains the significance of the Redeemed Christian Church of God and how its appeal to African students was the impetus for the initiation of the STM African Catholic Mass. The chapter also has shown the uniqueness of the African Mass and the differences between the two religious groups.

Chapter Four focuses specifically the interviews with the 20 people who participated in the research. The analysis is structured thematically, following the content of the interview questions. The participants' responses are quoted without alteration.

Chapter Four

Analysis of Interview Data

Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to describe and analyse the experiences of African Catholic newcomers to Saskatoon. The chapter provides responses from interviewees that reveal current realities of African newcomers during their settlement process. As noted earlier, 20 newcomers participated in the interview guided by a questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions (see Appendix 2). Nineteen participants were interviewed face-to-face and one by telephone.

During the process of analysis, I have used numbers. Although the use of numbers in qualitative research is contested, in my discussion of these data I include rough percentages by way of “quasi-statistics”—“simple counts of things to support terms such as some, usually, and most.”¹ As Joseph A. Maxwell notes, limited quantitative data can help to

identify patterns that are not apparent simply from the unquantitized qualitative data ... or even to participants ... Individuals are often unaware of larger patterns beyond their immediate experience, and quantitative data can thus complement the participants’ perspectives in providing a clearer and more in-depth understanding of what’s going on in a particular setting or for individuals who belong to a particular category.²

The participants’ varied experiences can be categorized in terms of five major themes regarding the role the Catholic Church plays in the adaptation of African immigrants to Saskatoon. These are the five core themes: 1) The role of the Catholic Church in the settlement process; 2) Importance of worshipping in a Catholic community; 3) Importance of the STM African Catholic Mass; 4) Challenges faced both in society and in church during the adaptation stage; and 5) Suggestions to meet the challenges faced by African Catholic newcomers in Canadian society. I have quoted many of the participants at length in their own words in order to give weight to their specific experiences.

4.1 The role of the Catholic Church in the settlement process

4.1.1 Saskatoon agencies

The participants were asked whether they had received help in settling from any local agency (e.g., Saskatoon Open Door Society, Newcomer Information Centre, Saskatchewan Intercultural Association, and Global Gathering Place). Sixteen participants (80%)

¹ Joseph A. Maxwell, “Using Numbers in Qualitative Research,” *Qualitative Inquiry* 16 (2010): 476.

² Ibid., 479.

acknowledged that they did not get much help in settling from any of the settlement agencies in Saskatoon. Most of the African newcomers attributed their establishment in Saskatoon to the efforts of friends, families, and good will from various people or by themselves. As Jayne stated,

Oh, I didn't involve any agency, I mean I had friends and family who helped me and I just used an international student office. So, I just used that and plus the family and friends. I really did not involve other outside agencies you know. Things like Saskatoon Open Door or anything like that I did not.

Sarah added,

Wo, okay, oh, what agencies helped me to settle down? When I came, I know there were already people here, yeah, there were already people here. So, through them, first of all, we landed in Calgary, my other cousins were there. We were there like three days or so, then we came to Saskatoon, mmh by then my husband met me, there in Calgary yeah. So, we stayed there like three days and then we came to Saskatoon and we also had friends here, cousins here and they all helped.

Maria recalled, "Mmh, there was no agency that helped me to settle down but I met good people who volunteered to assist me like the Residents' Assistance in the hostel I told you. Who introduced me to some Nigerians, who took me to market to buy some of the things I needed, and then people at the Faculty of Nursing were very nice to me, so they helped me too."

Some participants felt it was the responsibility of those who granted them scholarships to help them settle down. Nakato declared, "I didn't have an agency help me when I came. It was the responsibility of the Vaccine Institute Organization for Infectious Disease here in the University Human Resources to pick me from the airport and gave me a hotel to stay for three days and then after that, in those three days I searched for a place to stay and then moved so." Imeah observed, "No agency helped me to settle down. I settled by myself."

Only three participants (15%) were helped by the Open Door Society to settle in Saskatoon. Tumo noted, "It was Open Door Society, helped me to settle down." And one participant was helped by the Saskatchewan Intercultural Association to gain Canadian experience together with his wife when they arrived.

4.1.2 Services from Catholic organizations

Many participants (85%) were not aware of any Catholic services offered in Saskatoon (e.g., Refugee Ministry [migration office], Catholic Women's League, Knights of Columbus, Catholic Health Care, Youth Ministry, Education of the Laity Fund, Restorative Ministry, among others), so they hadn't received any services. Mama insisted, "No, no I have not used any

agencies. It was just recently I went to Open Door. I was looking for jobs, I just went there like, that was the only time I used them. I don't even know about the Catholic agencies. No." Rich added, "Eh, no, for now, I haven't yet received any help or benefit from any Catholic agency while unfortunately, I don't even know of any here in Saskatoon so ah I can't really speak much in regards to that because I don't know any."

Three participants (15%) received some services from individual churches they attended, from individuals, and from Catholic school. One participant mentioned Bishop James Mahoney High School, and another cited Catholic assistance from a different diocese. Waridi remembered,

We were members of St. Augustine parish, so while we were in Saskatchewan we meet with the priest and told him about having a church wedding with them. They made arrangement for Engaged Encounter classes for us in Regina. They were concerned about how we will get to the venue, and they even drove down to Regina to take us back to Saskatoon. It was successful. The parish was just like a family to us because they were so supportive during that period and during our stay in Saskatchewan. And every time we go to church they make sure that they take us back. Because we were not driving, a member can just volunteer to drive us home.

Ade Olu recalled, "I did not receive any service, per se. Like I said I am a member of the Knights of Columbus and so we have things that we Knights do to support brother-knights. Outside that, I was also privileged to receive some scholarships from the Diocese of Prince Albert. I received several, two or three scholarships during my education from the University of Saskatchewan. So, that would be something I received as services and I am very grateful."

4.1.3 Benefits from the services of Catholic agencies

In response to the question, "Did you benefit from the services of Catholic agencies? If yes, in what ways?" Most participants (85%) felt they have not benefitted from Catholic agencies with settlement services when they arrived at Saskatoon. For example, Deng Jok noted, "Yeah, I would say no. No, because I have never had any service from any agency yes." Imeah added, No, I did not receive any.

Only (15%) claimed to have benefitted in some way from Catholic agencies, more broadly defined. Three participants acknowledged that they benefitted spiritually by attending church, some felt they were welcomed in their individual churches. For instance, OJ said, "No, no. Material things no ... I can't say no to spiritual; I have benefitted a lot spiritually from the church here." And one participant felt she was the one who gave a helping hand in the church. Anashe said, "Ah what I can say I benefited is maybe to go to the church and help (laughs)." She then

added,

No, just like the end of last year, like when I went to, I am the one who went to them, and I decided I want just to meet and know people as well. I went to St. Michael, and then there I have seen change because there the people are appreciating just coming near to you and to talk to you. I like their friendly, they are friendly and then I just, because I needed to know really people and experience other people I decide to clean the church one Saturday in the month. And that thing helps me just to meet different people and talk because if I clean today like one Saturday in a month, next month I will be with a new person, then next one will be a new person. That, I can say, is a benefit to me because I meet different people. From there I have a friend who is called Denise, she is a professor at the university and she used to drop me [off]. Now we know each other from that cleaning of the church; now she helps me every time to take or pick me and my son to church every Sunday, which is a benefit, if it wasn't like that I could not have seen her. Yeah.

On the contrary, Useni counts the blessings he has received from Catholic services though he does not specify which Catholic services. His family received school graduation fees and food. He said joyfully,

Yes, I did benefit. While in Saskatoon I think most of the role played by Roman Catholic Church in Saskatoon here is basically when I was going BJM—Bishop James Mahoney High School; that is what BJM stands for [laughs]. BJM so it is a Catholic school, so when I was going there, today they have a policy where they look for children who are coming actually from very, very poor families, families that have low income especially when we arrive here as refugees. They try to find those families, so that they can be able like to support them in so many ways and spiritual or in terms of like financial help, not really money but other things, some things like giving food, or clothing and other things, like some form of coupons and cheque so that they can go to the business stores and buy food and make sure that the young ones are given clothing. I think the most important period, I think is during thanksgiving period; that is when you find there is a lot of food that they offer to families. So, my family benefitted from some of these things because we have younger kids. And, my sister has two friends that they go to St. Ann's. It is a Catholic Church in Lawson Heights close to Lawson Mall. ... They also make sure they engage my mum to get used to Canadian culture. Take her out with kids to a restaurant to eat and maybe take her outside around the city just to take kids to play, so the kids can play, so the Catholic Church has played a great role in our settlement process in Saskatoon here.

One participant mentioned taking part in a course in journal writing and critical thinking that was offered at St. Thomas More College as an aid to adaptation.

4.1.4 Benefits from services of non-Catholic agencies

Eleven participants hadn't received any assistance from any non-Catholic agencies

(55%). For example, Maria said, “I didn’t meet any non-Catholic service agency, so I didn’t meet any of them, so, mmh, yeah.” Thirty five percent received services from different official organizations in Saskatoon such as the Open Door Society, Saskatchewan Intercultural Association, Saskatoon Newcomers Centre, and Frances Morrison Library. The services mentioned include seeking information, assistance with understanding Canadian culture and how to integrate into workplaces, and borrowing books from the library for more information about Canadian culture, to name a few. Tumo said, “I think Open Door Society is a non- Catholic agency; I benefitted a lot, so they helped me with a lot of things so they helped me to find a place for me to stay, helping me to get a bank account, things to do with health care card, social insurance card and going to Superstore, how to do things, how to be self-reliant.” Useni appreciated the work Open Door Society did for his family but he painfully explained how his sister’s life was ruined by one staff member. He sadly recalled,

Well, one of the social service agencies did a great role actually by helping us to settle in Saskatoon here, though one of their social workers also played a big negative role in my family which I don’t think is possible for me to mention here. So like when we arrived here we have like a young sister keep on going to the high school, then the social worker who actually is supposed to help us settle in this country and know life, how to become independent and get used to Canadian culture and how to progress, how to work hard and become a successful citizen. Instead of this social worker empowering us and actually my sister, he kept on calling my sister from school, you have doctor’s appointment and all these kinds of things and then at the end of the day, we came to realize that my sister is pregnant because of that guy. So as for now I just think the guy ran away, he is not actually working with the agency. This is one of the things which is very disappointing when somebody is supposed to help you to settle then instead he came to bring more damage. Up to now, my sister is still struggling with the negative impact he did to her, because right now she is having a mental problem since that time until now yeah. That is one of the negative roles one of the social service agency staff have played in our family. And the reason why I am mentioning it is I don’t want the same thing to happen to other families that arrive at this agency instead of getting help, then they get completely destroyed like what my sister is going through right now, mental problems and the stuff now. I don’t want the same thing to happen to other people because some of these people leave their countries for very painful reasons, they came here like to make sure they that at least settle and change life and find new meaning in life but instead somebody does stuff like that. It is then really, really terrible.

In addition, one participant benefitted from services of a non-Catholic agency as a student (Food Bank in Edmonton). Chimwemwe recalled, “As a student, I was a poor student; I used to

eat from the food bank because my funding was insufficient for me. So, I got some of my supplement from the food bank ... [in] Edmonton.”

One participant, Brother D, received services from an organization relating to his ethnic group:

Yes, I did, yeah so, I remember actually [pauses] currently like right now Ghanaians in Saskatoon have an association which we call Ghanaians' Canadian Association of Canada Sask, SK that is (GCA). We formed with two primary objectives: one to uphold the culture heritage of Ghanaian Canadians, basically, any person who is Ghanaian or who is Canadian or who both Ghanaian and Canadian together yeah. Culture heritage will be anything that is good about the culture in terms of the food, the dressing, and relating with each other. And some of the perspective that you grow up within a culture, for example, myself I grew up in a culture boy or girl the culture is always centered that you are prepared to know you when you become an adult the social responsibility we can play. ... As a Ghanaian heritage part of it includes compassion we have so far group activities together. There is food culture, there is dressing culture, music culture all of that. So, that in the case in the recent pass[ing] of a beloved member, they were the ones who came around be there with us, present with us, with the generosity of the gifts they give us all the compassion, just the present, that assured that we were understood the different in difficult times we were going through. And then that we are just here to help emotionally, financially. And in that time when you are lost, not knowing what to think but you need to have funeral that is organized, people have to know about the information, sorry that there is a person we are going to be absent from work but within that moment of grief and we needed people to get information across. Because we were not going to go to work, to school and we had the funeral organized there were many things to be organized and then compassionate people still do it generously to cover the cost of things. So, the group is non-Catholic or maybe it does not position itself as a Catholic, it is more of a culture so all faiths are accepted. But because of the culture, it has like this aspect of community social person first ah that was very helpful to us yes.

Another participant received informal services from an individual who was not a Catholic through invitations for lunch or dinner in her family, given rides to go shopping, and during the participant's wedding.

4.1.5 Comparing the Catholic services and non-Catholic services

Because they received services from only one group, 40% of participants were not able to say whether Catholic services or non-Catholic services were better. For instance, OJ stated “I can't compare because I didn't get any services from any non-Catholic agencies. So, I can't give any comparison.” Thirty five percent didn't receive services from either so they were not able to make any comparison. Adeline observed, “No comparison because I didn't get something from

both.” Only 15% had received services from both Catholic and non-Catholic sources and they found it hard to compare because services from both were helpful to them; as Useni observed,

Well, I can say the Catholic is more helpful but in other ways all of them actually are more helpful because they are trying to ensure that my family or myself get positive impact spiritually and in other ways like in terms of how I am settling and sometimes we don't have enough food; even those non-Catholic like mostly let me say like United Apostle church, they also play a big role like if they see that kids are because like I am with my mum, so sometimes you find that kids like let's say the kids are staying at home, they have to find ways to make sure they take kids outside to play yeah. It gives them that opportunity at least when they are growing they are mentally and physically something health for their bodies. Kids need to play all the time, so it is very hard for someone who is very new_moved here is very new, you don't know where the place is for the kids to play and stuff like that. So, if there is not an organization like churches like the Catholic Church, United Apostle Church to help the child grow, go out and play, it will be very hard for the kids to grow actually. And Open Door also helped me to play soccer and stuff like that which is also great.

Ten percent received services from non-Catholic churches or other organizations. For instance, Gozmok noted,

Well, ah you know when I came here earlier there is a, I don't know actually if I should consider them as a service but I will say the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Saskatoon here, they have this soccer team that they sponsor and you know, they sponsor and play in the league, in the city league, and I am one of the players. I am on their team and they have been sponsoring the team and I play with them. So, to me is like a good way of one exercising my body and is good ways of seeing, connecting and interacting with people too. I would say I have gained that part, that kind of spirit from the Redeemed Christian Church of God.

To conclude from the responses, the members were not able to differentiate well between the services they received, whether they were Catholic or secular, organized or individual.

4.1.6 Memorable experiences with the agencies

Seventy percent of the participants had memorable experiences with the official agencies, and with some of specific individuals who helped them to settle in Saskatoon. One participant remembers how they were helped to learn how to take the bus, to open a bank account, to check weather changes, and to protect their children. Another participant was involved in sporting activities and winning a youth immigrant leadership award; two participants were involved with the Knights of Columbus events; one participant remembers how he used to get food from the food bank; others mentioned meeting people from their own countries and speaking the same

languages, sacrifices made by some people to assist newcomers, free access to agencies; computers and libraries, volunteering for Open Door jobs, experiences of how personable church leaders are, the kindness of people, experiences of making new friends and learning about other cultures. Anashe explained,

Open Door Society—what I can remember is that they teach us how to settle in this country. They used to send me someone to show how to take a bus; in my country, we did not have the bus. It was a good experience. Just you have a card and you put there. The other thing they, they teach you to know different things: how to go to the bank, how to, many things, how to check the weather changing, how to protect your child. Yeah, it is really, ah, it is really good.

Thirty percent did not have any memorable experience to share because they did not receive any services from Catholic or non-Catholic agencies. For instance Adeline insists, “Nothing I can say was memorable because I didn’t receive any service.”

4.1.7 Place of worship

In response to the question, “How did you find a place of worship when you arrived in Saskatoon? The participants had different ways of finding information about where to worship when they arrived as newcomers. One participant was informed by some Congolese Catholic community members she met at St. Mary’s Catholic Church; later she relocated to St. Michael’s due to a move. Two participants were informed by staff members of the Open Door Society (one worker was a Catholic and took the newcomer to St. Paul’s Co-cathedral). In another case, an Open Door staff member worshipped at an Anglican Church and took the newcomer for prayers with him on Sundays. Later he got connected to friends who introduced him to the United Apostolic Church. Also, as a student at Bishop James Mahoney High School, he was involved in Catholic prayers at school. When he entered university, he started praying at the STM College Chapel.

One participant recalls that before she came to Saskatoon, she had heard about STM Chapel on the University campus. This is because she had been a student at the University of Manitoba and she attended St. Paul’s Chapel where a Catholic sister had informed her about the STM Chapel. So, when she arrived she went online and checked the hours for the mass and then attended. Four other participants who also went online decided to worship at Holy Family Cathedral, St. Joseph’s on Broadway, and two participants found the STM Chapel. For instance, Nakato declares, “Google did help me. I was looking for a church I knew that I have to go to

church and I have never known not to go to church. So, the first thing I did was Google from where I was the nearest Catholic church.”

Five participants found churches through friends; one was introduced by friends who were attending Elim Pentecostal Church. Later when she got married she started attending a Catholic Church beginning in 2012. One participant found a church community through friends (McDonald and Cletus) who worshipped at the STM Chapel, one participant was helped by Ghanaian friends who took him to Holy Family Cathedral and informed him about the STM Chapel; however, he settled at Holy Family. One participant was helped by a Seventh Day Adventist friend who had Catholic friends and introduced him STM. For example, Brother D explained,

Oh yes, my friends from Ghana who were here already ... They led me to a place in Sutherland and that was actually the original home of Holy Family, now the Holy Family, sorry on Nelson was on the 104th Street East. My cousin took me there and like even ah, before we went he mentioned to me and said there was one on campus and we ended attending the two of them but I liked the Holy Family.

Another participant had come to Saskatoon from Edmonton for a job interview. After the interview, the human resource manager asked him to go around the city to see if he liked the place. It was during the tour of the city that he saw Holy Family Cathedral. So, when he came to Saskatoon he went to church there. Later after settling down, he started attending St. Ann's Catholic Church in Lawson Heights. Another participant narrates that it was through his roommate who was attending the Redeemed Christian Church of God and attended there one Sunday. Then he asked his friend if there was a Catholic Church around and he told him about the STM Chapel where he started attending.

Five participants located churches through their families, spouses or cousins. For instance, one participant joined her husband who was attending STM weekly mass, and St. Augustine during the holidays when there was no mass at STM. One participant was told by her cousins about STM and later he went to Holy Family. Sarah found her church through her husband, who was worshiping at Holy Family; later she came to STM for comparison as to which one was more accessible and more suitable; then she went to St. Joseph's on Broadway, and finally, she went to Our Lady of Lourdes. Finally, together with her family, she settled at our Lady of Lourdes where it was “awesome” for them; they felt at home there, people were welcoming, especially one of the Sisters, and besides that, when new people come to the church,

Fr. Phong Pham introduces them to the congregation. Another participant said it was through family that he attended St. Mary's on Avenue O. One participant was assisted by a family whom they were staying with though they were not Catholic, so the first two Sundays he attended church with them. Since the family knew he was a Catholic they introduced him to nearby St. Patrick's Church.

One participant acknowledges that for the first couple of months she didn't attend any church until one day she saw a church and she attended it but she didn't like what she saw there and what she expected so she stopped going, until she eventually met people from her country of origin who introduced her to their church.

4.1.8 Importance of attending a Catholic Church

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) explains the Catholic doctrine that teaches that "the Church is "holy", "Catholic," "one," and "apostolic," which is inseparable from belief in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."³ Further, the word Catholic means "universal," in the sense of "according to the totality" or "in keeping with the whole."⁴ In addition, "the church is a Catholic in double sense. First, the church is Catholic because Christ is present in her. 'Where there is Christ Jesus, there is the Catholic church.' Secondly, the church is Catholic because 'she has been sent out by Christ on a mission to the whole of the human race.'"⁵ McCarthy defines the word Catholic to mean "one true church of Christ, namely, its universality"⁶

The members of STM African Catholic Community, aware of this Catholic Church doctrine, mostly (95%) emphasized that it was important for them to worship at a Catholic church. Their reasons expressed the following themes: Catholic faith, Holy Eucharist/Communion, symbols and values, prayers, Catholic tradition/doctrine, inculturation, depth in life, attending mass, spiritual growth, the foundation of other Christian other churches, and a source of belonging (feeling at home, comfortable).

One participant who had not belonged to a Catholic Church before stressed it was important for her to be connected to her church. Jayne observed, "I think attending church or

³ Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Canada: publications service, 1994), 165, no. 750

⁴ Ibid., 182 no. 830.

⁵ Ibid., 183 no. 830.

⁶ Timothy G. McCarthy, *The Catholic Tradition: The Catholic in the Twentieth Century*, rev. and exp. 2nd ed. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1998), 81.

going to church is important and is part of how you connect to your faith, how your faith is enriched, ah, I think that if you get yourself detached from that, there is something you lose, there is a sense of community when you are, get together with other people. Your faith is strengthened I mean apart from just being present, you find people who share things in common with you, people who share a common belief, a common way of thinking so it is just other areas of life that is truly important.”

4.1.8.1 Catholic faith

Faith is an important quality for every Catholic believer. This is because, in Catholicism, the individual is initiated into that faith during baptism, and life is conceived as a continuous journey; the church ensures that the faithful are reminded of it through their profession of the Apostles’ Creed or Nicene Creed at every Sunday mass. Therefore most (19) participants felt they didn’t want to lose the faith that they possessed. They observed that they had been born and raised Catholic, and they continue to be practicing Catholics. For most of the participants, Catholicism is the only faith they know, deeply imbedded in their lives, part and parcel of their existence. The only religious teaching they know is Catholic, and they intend to practice it until they die. For instance, Ade Olu declared, “[Laughs] It is given. I am perpetually Catholic. I love being Catholic. I am a Catholic, not because my family is Catholic nor my brother is a priest. Because in this faith is where I experience my God. I experience him in full, is not about the statue, not about the views, not about the fancy dress, or religious music. But, I have a personal relationship with God in this way of worship. And nothing is taking me out of this.”

4.1.8. 2 Holy Communion (Eucharist)

Holy Communion is another key aspect of Catholic practice that some participants noted they would not want to miss. According to Catholic doctrine on the Eucharist, there is much significance in receiving the “body and blood of Jesus Christ.” Believers are able to be filled with grace and every heavenly blessing; they experience the presence of Christ; the memory of Christ’s Passover is renewed; the soul is nourished and has an intimate personal relationship with Jesus (Holy Trinity); and partaking in a thanksgiving meal is an anticipation of heavenly glory.⁷ Five participants acknowledged that when they go to other churches they feel they are missing something. For instance, one participant said attending Mass and receiving the Eucharist is one of the things that she can’t fail to do if she is strong and can walk to church. As Anashe

⁷ Ibid., 302, no 1402.

observed, “Because I did not want to lose my faith. I wanted just to continue as I was raised up. My parents were Catholic. The teaching I know is Catholic. It was important to find a church as a Catholic ... If I miss Holy Communion on Sunday, I feel like I am sick. In some other churches, they don’t do that, yeah. And I want to raise my son too as a Catholic, yeah.”

4.1.8.3 Symbols and values

Some participants mentioned particular symbols and values that are important to them as Catholics that they would like to continue to practice because they have learned more about them. These include Catholic prayers, especially the Hail Mary, the Our Father, and making the sign of a cross. For instance, Useni said,

Well, as a kid who was raised Catholic, I was [in] a choir, I was like [in] Sunday school and a choir at Catholic church so I get used to; every church has its own symbols and values and how to pray and all those things. When I was raised as a Catholic most of the signs and symbols of praying are from the Catholic Church. Ah like mostly let me say cross sign and saying Hail Mary, Our Father Who Art in Heaven and those kinds of prayers. In some other churches, you can’t find, you can’t say those kinds of stuff because they have their different values and symbols of praying which is completely different.

4.1.8.4 Spiritual growth

Some participants declare that it is absolutely important to worship in a Catholic Church because Catholic worship is foundational to their spiritual life. For some, their faith grows, is strengthened, nourished by the church; it is where one encounters the presence of God. For example, Rich says, “Yeah, it was absolute[ly] very important for me to worship in the Catholic Church because like that is my foundation, you know, concerning spiritual life, concerning spiritual growth. I didn’t find it necessary to switch on to some, you know, other faith, believing churches at this point in time so I decided to stick on to my Roman Catholic faith, to my Roman Catholic beliefs, and I think I will continue doing that until I die.”

4.1.8.5 Sense of belonging

Ten participants mentioned experiencing a sense of belonging, feeling comfortable, fitting in well, and feeling at home in the Catholic Church. OJ noted,

Yes, it was very important. Because it is not like if I go to an area where there is no Catholic Church I will not go to church. Because the service I told you about for one year mandatory national service after the university in Nigeria where they have to put you in different regions, so where I stayed for the year there was no Catholic church there but there were other churches there. So, that period of one year I was still attending churches of the other denomination. But the Catholic faith was totally

important to me because it is something, it is not because I was born in it, raised in it that could be one of the reasons besides that I have grown and came to realize that, you know, is something I am comfortable with in Catholic faith. So, that's why it was important for me to keep that faith anywhere I go.

4.1.8.6 Foundation of all other Christian churches

One participant felt that when she came to Saskatoon there was no need of changing from the Catholic Church because she has been involved in the Catholic Church since she was born and she believes that all other denominations originated from the Catholic Church. Sarah observed "Yes. It was very important because I was raised a Catholic so I don't see the need of changing church, when my parents were involved in the Catholic Church, from day one ... So, yeah, let's say all these churches, they are all founded out of Catholic Church [claps]; in the beginning, it was the Catholic [laughs]. So, that is importance of it seriously [laughs]. So the Catholic Church is the foundation of everything for any other church."

4.1.8.7 Inculturation and Catholic doctrine

One participant said he fits well in the Catholic Church because the worship of God in the Catholic Church fits well with his indigenous tribal culture (Ghanaian Culture). He points to important aspects of his indigenous that have been inculturated in the Catholic Church, whereas other churches do not express them since they emphasize the centrality of Jesus more. The Catholic Church, however, embraces these aspects. He highlights the belief in spirits which Catholicism teaches, belief in ancestors which connects with Catholic saints; his culture practices animal offerings, comparable with the Catholic teaching that Jesus was the sacrificial Lamb of God who replaced animal offerings. In his culture, people offered prayers for the family, asked for rain, for young people getting married to be blessed with children among other kinds of supplications, the same kinds of things the Catholic faithful pray for. He also mentioned the material part of faith relating to the physical aspect of people, food, and housing to maintain and nourish the body that hosts the spirit; to him, the Catholic Church has a good philosophy on these matters. He comments that the Catholic Church has its schools to educate people and hospitals to treat people. His culture also emphasizes monotheism, there is recognition of a Greater Power, seeking good and avoiding evil, much like Catholicism. In addition, his culture values the maintaining of shrines, similar to churches. Brother D declared, "So yeah, back to this, why I worship in Catholic Church [pause] is to continue with the good life which I learned from ancestors, my parents to live, and find that continues ... fits well in the Catholic Church yes."

4.1.8 Worship in other churches

Most participants (85%) had worshipped in non-Catholic churches since moving to Saskatoon. Some participants currently attended more than one church. These churches include Elim Tabernacle (3), United Apostolic (1), Anglican (1), Seventh Day Adventist (4), Redeemed Christian Church of God (8), Faith Alive (1), New Life Pentecostal (1), and All Nations Full Gospel Church (1). Brother D, for instance, said, “Ooh yes. Yes, a number of them, Seventh Day Adventist, Elim Pentecostal Church, and we will be attending soon the Redeemed Church of God in Martensville. Now, so I have friends around in these churches if they have a program here and there.” Yeke listed, “Faith Alive, Elim and then All Nations Full Gospel Church.” Most of the churches that the participants attended (such as Elim, Redeemed, Faith Alive, New Life Pentecostal) have some commonalities such as having a lot of African members, having African styles of worship, and most of them are Pentecostal/evangelical denominations with enthusiastic, spirit-led worship, including singing a lot of praise and worship songs that are similar to African worship, hence appealing to African newcomers.

Two participants had attended non-Catholic churches but they could not remember the names of the churches. Tumo remembered, “Like I been to the Redeemed Christian Church of God, I have been sometimes I don’t know the name I just go and attend [laughs].” One participant has not attended a non-Catholic church here in Saskatoon but he attended a Pentecostal church in Newfoundland.

Only two participants (10%) had never attended a non-Catholic church in Saskatoon. Rich said, “No, I haven’t worshipped in any other church here in Saskatoon apart from the Roman Catholic Church, I don’t even wish to know any other churches here in Saskatoon or Canada. I’m just interested in my Catholic church. And it sticks like that.”

4.1.8.9 Reasons for attending other churches

The participants gave different reasons why they attended these churches. Some went because of their friends (55%) who invited them to their church. Ade Olu noted, “To these other churches, first, the fact that my friends count me worthy to be invited to their church. I think is a privilege that people consider you come to their church and worship with them and that is key. I am very personable, and I love music, and I love to dance, I love to learn, and I have belief that unity in my mind is best valued in diversity. Everybody has something to bring to the table, so when we gain from here and share from there we make a whole.” He added, “I would go but I

decide to go for mass before.” Some were invited for child dedications, as Waridi noted, “A friend did a child dedication. So, she invited me. I think the second time she had a baby birthday in the church and she invited me and the third time I was just with them and they said they were going for Wednesday program and I went with them.”

Some participants attended because of different programs in those churches and to support the community, like OJ:

So occasionally I got invited, I go there to when they have programs sometimes I go Sundays too [Pentecostal churches in Newfoundland]. As well, another thing that kept on drew me there, there was this I think they call it, I forgotten what they call but is something close to the Open Door society does here in Saskatoon. Immigrants come in especially the ones that they don't know how to speak English so they come in, I think is talk coffee, something like that. They invite people to come in the people who know to speak, who know how to speak well fluent in English so they invited them to come in and chat with people who do not know how to speak English who just arrived in Canada. So, that way I think it happened every Wednesday then. So every Wednesday, I used to go to this place with my friend, we chat, we meet people, we encourage and help them on how to speak yeah.

Some participants attended other churches because there are many people from Africa in those churches and they also sing well. Anashe recalled, “Yes, I went to, I went to Elim Church because of my friend I get at society. Elim Church is a big church. There are many Africans. She just took me there because she wanted me to meet others from Africa, because there are a lot of people from Africa there. Maybe she wanted me feel like one of them. It was good, not bad, like it was good. The songs for them it was nice. As you know here in Canada they don't sing as back home. The songs I enjoyed too, listening to those songs.”

One participant said he went to the Seventh Day Adventist church because his friend was participating in church activities like drama and singing in the choir, so he went to see and learn how they do their activities.

One participant said a reason for going to another church was to meet with people from his country who speak the same dialect. Gozmok stated,

Like the Redeemed Christian Church of God, the attraction there was the knowing that you are going there to see people who are from the same place with you. Knowing when you go there you can relate to people in your local dialects and then you guys you can talk about experiences back home. You know, you have that connection, that local connection, between both of you. That is again attraction.

Some participants didn't have anything significant that really attracted them to go to another church. For instance, Mama observed, "That's why I am saying I would not really get up and say I am going to Elim, no, no matter how boring the Catholic Church is, I still feel I don't know that is what really I have known. I am more comfortable with the Catholic Church. I feel it gives me more spiritual meaning than any other church so the only time I have gone there is just you know is to support someone's whatever [laughs] but I don't really make that conscious effort to go."

One participant went to a Pentecostal church because they are the ones who helped him to settle when he was a newcomer in Newfoundland.

4.2 Importance of the STM African Catholic Mass

4.2.1 Mass attendance before coming to Saskatoon

Back in Africa, some participants (20%) had attended church every day. For example, Ade Olu observed, "Everyday. [Laughs] Every day. My, if you can't find me in the university. Matter of fact I was the president of my university I forgot to say that. I was the president of Catholic students at my university. So I lived my life in the church."

Forty-five percent had attended mass every Sunday. For instance, Chimwemwe said, "Every Sunday I go to the church." Some participants (35%) attended every Sunday and sometimes weekday masses ranging from five times, four times, three times or at least twice. For instance, OJ noted, "Oh, ah, as often as I do now, every Sunday and sometimes weekday masses." Some participants had specific days for adoration of the Eucharist, charismatic meetings, Sunday school, choir rehearsal, mass servers' meetings, mass for youth, bible studies, and learning more about Catholic doctrine during youth meetings.

Ninety-five percent had attended Catholic churches back in their home countries; the exception was one participant who attended Pentecostal church during school holidays. But on school days, the participant attended mass every day. Some participants noted that they had attended non-Catholic churches when there were different events such as burials, weddings or any other function when invited.

4.2.2 Church attendance in Saskatoon

Fifty-five percent of the participants attended Sunday liturgy every week here in Saskatoon. As Yeke put it, "Oh, yeah, every Sunday." Four participants (20%) attended church every Sunday and sometimes during the week. Maria stated, "Well, I attend mass in Saskatoon

every Sunday, then sometimes during the week, I also come for mass, it depends on my timetable, yeah.” Three participants (15%) attended Sunday liturgy irregularly (two or three times per month). Useni noted, “Well when I got here I used to go most of times but now because of work and all other stuff and also sometimes you find that in this country sometimes some of the things you may find a job that actually only offers you hours the same time when you are supposed to be in church but those are the only hours that you can have. So let me say sometimes maybe a month maybe I can go to church two or three times because some of them are taken by work. So it is very hard in this country sometimes if you don’t work and how gonna pay your bills and stuff like that.”

Two participants (10%) rarely attended church. One of the two confessed that she is active only during summer but not winter. The other member declares that at the beginning when he was new he attended every Sunday, afterward he started skipping one Sunday; later he stopped attending church. Themba regretfully noted,

I initially, when I started I used to attend every Sunday but as I mentioned earlier, I just got so carried out in school. My program was really busy I was working in the lab, I know it is not a perfect excuse (laughs) but it was so busy, I just was so carried, on Sunday I would find myself at seven morning, sometimes sleep there. It was really tough and busy and it was a challenging time in my life. I know I should have sought/solace in God or at church that time, but for some reason I kept working, working, and I thought I would work, I just finish early and move on. So I initially used to attend regularly and some point I started skipping some Sundays after that I started skipping completely.

4.2.3 Attendance at STM African Mass

Since the African Mass is held only once a month, members of the congregation go to other Catholic parishes (or the weekly STM Sunday Mass) at other times. Forty-five percent of the participants declared that they attend African Mass once per month (first Sunday of the month), that is, every time it is held. Waridi said, “Every first Sunday.” Thirty percent of the participants stated that they attend the African Mass irregularly. Some said they had attended every month initially, but later their attendance became less regular. For instance, Yeke said, “Ah, it is supposed to be once a month but sometimes other programs do coincide, so I will say at least once in every two months yeah (laughs).” Twenty percent of the participants said they rarely attended African Mass. The reasons they gave for not attending the African Mass regularly were work schedule, the timing of African Mass, and academic pressure. Themba declares, “I

must say that I have not gone like the last one half or two years ... Before I used to go almost every Sunday of the month.” Nakato added,

Okay. Probably I am going, to be honest with you, so timing. It is a two o’clock and two o’clock is a half day. I am a student and I need time to prepare for the next day. I would rather go for morning mass than afternoon mass. So that is the only biggest reason why the African Mass never works for me. Timing, afternoon never works because in the morning once you are done, I still have half of the other day to do other things. When I come for that mass is in between and I have a distance to cover before I come, so no.

Tumo observed, “Actually we started it and I used to come all the time and academic pressure, and then other pressure, life pressure made me start missing it ... Just a lot of commitment.”

4.2.4 Finding the STM African Mass

The participants recalled that they came to know about the African Mass either through their friends, or particular individuals, church bulletins, online, student newspapers, posters at STM, some were pioneer members, or some had found it through their husbands. Thirty-five percent of participants said was through friends, like Useni: “The STM African Catholic Mass well, I came to understand about it I think, they put in a bulletin and walls there and actually one of my friends called Teddy who was attending STM here, most of the time then he came to me and told me [they were] actually forming an African Student Association Mass in STM there. So if I am willing I can come and join and that is how I joined them by the help of a friend who connected me. And now I am a regular customer [laughs].”

Some participants found out about the Mass through church bulletins and the student newspaper, like Jayne: “Oh I don’t remember very well, I know that it was, I think it was, I used to come to STM [Sunday] Mass and I think it was in the bulletin. I think, and then there was also some information in the student newspaper (*The Sheaf*), then there were several of us that we’re actually involved in the beginning of it, my husband and few of other people.” Three female participants became involved through their husbands. For instance, Sarah said, “It was started in 2011. Okay. That is exactly the time I came and my husband attended it I think some time ago and introduced me.” Five participants acknowledged that it was through particular African Catholic Mass members such as Peter, McDonald, Cletus, Teddy and Gabriel. For instance, Mama noted, “Actually, actually my friend Cletus, you remember Cletus ... They started that whole thing I know, like I remember him telling me and all that. It was through him I got

involved yeah”

Some respondents were pioneer members (15%); for example, Ade Olu observed, “I was one of the initiators [laughs]. So, I did not find out. I was part of creators. Eh, we initiated that idea. You know. Let us do these, so I was one of the pioneer members.”

4.2.5 Settlement and the STM African Mass

In response to the question, “Would say that the STM African Catholic Mass is helping/ has helped you to settle in Saskatoon?” 70% of the participants felt the STM African Mass had not helped them with a settlement. Some said that the STM African Catholic Mass has not helped them at all especially with practical matters like finding a job, life skills, housing, or where to do some shopping. For example, Nakato noted, “No (laughs). Not really. No.”

Some members admit that they had already settled in Saskatoon before the mass started in 2011, but some acknowledge that the mass has also helped them in spiritual growth for it encourages one to keep faith, uplifts an individual during difficulties, gets them to interact with other African people, and to feel comfortable practicing values achieved during childhood. For example, Jayne recalled,

Well, I was already settled in Saskatoon, in terms of helping me, I mean just connecting me to the kind of faith of, the kind of worship I was familiar with, because I went to Catholic schools and when I go to African Mass is a reflection of the mass, somehow a reflection, is not up to sometimes you know I miss the liveliness of the Kenyan mass. I find it very different from the other African regions so there is some closeness to that, it takes me back to those experiences that I had the African way of worshipping so in that it connects me to that. In terms of settling, I had already settled [laughs] or I had settled as much I can be. But in terms of just helping me to connect me to a way of worship, you know it is bringing something re-enriching my way of worship yeah. That is what I can say.

Adeline added, “When you have good spirituality and what is happening is hard, you still have the energy to go on, you have to thank God. And when everything is going on well even if there are some troubles, or there are some difficulties you believe you have been uplifted spiritually.”

While some participants had settled in Saskatoon before they heard about the STM African Catholic Mass, some observe that it is way of fulfilling African goals to keep the African Catholic Church alive in Saskatoon, to have a sense of belonging with people from Africa, and worshipping in the African way that connects them to worship, and re-enriches worship.

Thirty percent of the participants responded “yes,” that the STM African Mass has helped them to settle in Saskatoon in the following ways: sense of belonging and community, members

sharing experiences, information, making friends with people from Africa thus experiencing joy. As OJ reflected,

Just as you mentioned coming from Africa there is a way that we celebrate mass and it is very different from the way the mass is celebrated here. Since I am deeply rooted in Catholic I have always stayed although I have visited beside STM, I go to Our Lady of Lourdes just to have that variety. So with the introduction of African mass just to celebrate the mass the way we celebrate in African way meeting others Africans and non-Africans who celebrate it has given me a sense of well-being, a sense of belonging as compared to the regular mass where you just attend the mass and after the mass everybody goes home but with the African mass after the mass we get together, we talk, and we find out what is happening in everybody's life. You get to understand and encourage each other to keep going. That helps somebody to settle better.

Some participants said it helped them to enjoy African music, the singing songs from different countries from Africa, accompaniment by African musical instruments such as drums, shakers, tambourines, kayamba. And Africans enjoy body movement: dancing and clapping of hands. Yeke noted, "Oh yeah, even though the liturgy is the same, the singing, drumming, and dancing makes a difference. So, there are a lot of Catholics who sometimes come here and because of their way of worship then they start going to the other churches but like once STM was introduced, I know a lot of us were very happy."

Some observe that Africans have a way of worship, Africans have a way of celebrating mass, which is different from the way the mass is celebrated in Canada. As Deng Jok outlined,

I would say yes it has; since its beginning, it has helped me to settle a lot better than when I came. Just as you mentioned coming from Africa there is a way that we celebrate mass and it is very different from the way the mass is celebrated here. Since I am deeply rooted in Catholic I have always stayed although I have visited besides STM, I go to Our Lady of Lourdes just to have that variety. So, with the introduction of African Mass just to celebrate the mass the way we celebrate in African way, meeting other Africans and non-Africans who celebrate it has given me a sense of well-being, a sense of belonging as compared to the regular mass where you just attend the mass and after the mass everybody goes home but with the African Mass after the mass we get together; we talk; we find out what is happening in everybody's life. You get to understand and encourage each other to keep going. That helps somebody to settle better.

Some participants have been helped by individuals from the STM African Mass to settle down. For some it is like a family for it brings the sense of togetherness, sense of belonging, feeling at home, connected, happy, cheerful, a reminder of how it is at home. Maria explained,

Eh, you see well, I will say they have helped me to settle because these people, I

see as holding the same values with me and so that way, it has helped me to settle and then we have, some common problems ... We have common problems, for instance, problem with cold, you know after mass, we are always discussing, we discuss about how cold it has been, it is not cold like that in Nigeria. So, we, we do I think care about each other, we are concerned about each other, that is very good. And then we give each other information, information, I think all those things have really helped me to cope, yeah. I see them as members of a family anyway, I think they helped me to cope.

4.2.6 Involvement with STM African Catholic Mass

All the interviewees emphasized that they are involved in different activities that take place in the African Mass. These activities are singing and dancing, playing musical instruments, committing to choir practice and choir membership, reading the word of God, teaching other members songs and learning new songs from different languages, serving as sacristan, co-ordinating the choir, chanting responsorial psalms during worship, acting as mass server, organizing songs at the beginning of the start of the African mass, and collecting songs and putting them together.

For instance, Yeke observed, “Yes, I have helped on the sanctuary as a mass server on a few occasions as well as the day’s reading. Anytime there is an opportunity and help is needed, am always available to help.” Useni added, “Well, my main activities are singing and playing instruments and those are main activities, singing and playing instruments that I usually do, getting involved in choir practice, so those are some of the things yeah.”

4.3 Challenges to adapting into Canadian society

The participants elaborated at length on different challenges they had faced and some still they continue to face while they are in Saskatoon. The following themes come from the discussion of challenges: Weather issues, culture shock, language barrier, discrimination and racism, difficulties balancing church attendance and work, and lack of family.

4.3.1 Weather issues

Almost all the participants expressed that Saskatoon is cold especially (but not only) during winter. This is in contrast with the warm climates found in Africa. So, the participants find it difficult to adapt. Some had experienced difficulty in pushing baby strollers in the snow. Anashe said,

The first thing, when I first came, it took me a long time to know other people or people to come near you, to help you. It took me a long time. You know. So, and the weather it was really hard. As I told you, my little son, he was one year, and to

push the stroller in the snow. It wasn't easy. I was always sitting in the house alone you know, Africa we are used to be near even if you are in the [refugee] camp, you are just listening people talking you feel like ... but first time when I was sitting in the house alone. I felt scared again what was going on outside, what am I going to face, how am I going to face the new country like this, what am I going to talk. My English was really bad because we speak French in our country so but with God, I have tried you know. Right now, I give glory to God that my son is four years and I have passed through all those things. And after that I went to see, when I reached St. Michael [parish], really I saw people with good heart, and help, come near and talk to me, you know as I told you that yeah. It is not easy when you are a newcomer. When you are new here, it is not easy.

4.3.2 Culture shock

Some participants said that they faced the challenge of culture shock. For they found everything is different from what they have been used in Africa, people, food, culture, style of worship. The way of doing things here in Saskatoon is different from their home countries. For instance, Mama said,

What else can I think about? Just relating to people from different cultures you know like I guess like when you first come it's a lot of culture shock so many things that you see people doing like it is just different. It is because you are not used to it. That is their culture. I think if you are in this culture you may see not see anything wrong but they are right it is a different culture so a lot of, you know, shocks here and there, I just looking at them and say no, no as for this, I don't think is right.

4.3.3 Language barrier

Some participants admitted that there is a problem of native Canadians understanding African accents. This leads to lack of understanding each other. Sarah reflected,

Ah, mmh, I think some of the challenges are like, I don't want to be very aggressive [laughs]; some of the challenges that I faced are, you know, that we have an accent, everybody has an accent, white has an accent, and the black has an accent. But I mean that I went somewhere in Walmart some time ago when I came first, and when you are speaking to them, you feel like, they ignore you, some people like, know you because you have an accent, they will not take their time to understand what you are saying, they will tell you have an accent and then walk away from you. Those are challenges that, and I mean we are all human beings, we have the blood that they have, I have, same blood, we all have the same blood but I mean that they should treat us as human beings as well; they treat us as if we are something else I don't know the word for that. I mean we should all get to know one another, get to know me I get to know you, you will understand me better than trying to avoid yeah. ...Like you know, it is the same English that we all speak just that they modify their own, that is the difference. ... I remember like even in

university call centre where I worked, the same issue, sometimes when you are talking even Sr. Agatha may even tell you better (laughs) eh apparently on phone, they will shut down the phone, just hang up the phone just because you have an accent, they will not take their time, some are nice I will be frank with you, some are nice, some have been in Africa, I mean some knows African culture, others they don't want anything to do with Africans.

Also, two participants have a language barrier with regard to English since they are from countries where their official language is French, so they are not fluent in English. Adeline said, "One of them is language, English; I hate it and the second one what is it. When I feel like I am not driving that is a challenge for me, because I am not able to go wherever I want to go. I cannot be able to do what I want to do so that a challenge too, yeah."

4.3.4 Discrimination and racism

Some participants shared that they have experienced racism and discrimination in their places of work and in school. As Mama put it,

Ah the other thing is yeah there are some great people, Canadians are very nice people sometimes you come across people and you are like I have never come across wonderful people like that. There are great people out there and at the same time, there are some nasty ones too. There are bad people too who can say things, racism is a big thing; we all face it at work so there is one thing that I mean, like I guess most people face especially if you are a person of colour, it is an obvious one you face. Your accent alone is an issue for some people because you don't know how to speak like them they think you are not speaking English you are speaking something else. But I mean what is accent is just tone right, I just sound different from you? That is, it is not because I am not speaking good English. So, I have done jobs where people tell you on phone like in the [call] centre in jobs and people abuse you over the phone and even at work the way some people stare, pass certain comments so there are certain things you know what I just tell myself this is not the age for those things to affect me so it doesn't really bother me.

4.3.5. Difficulties balancing school, work, and church attendance

Some participants expressed their concern about working on Sundays so that they can be able to pay the bills, especially when mass times collide with work hours. Useni said,

Well, challenges that I am facing is, that I continue to face in Saskatoon here are: one it is like, a work schedule and prayer schedule, sometimes does not correspond. That is a continuous challenge I always have to keep on reminding my manager make sure that you don't schedule me this day, this Sunday and stuff like that. So, these are the continuous ones. So the other challenge that I think I am facing, going to school sometimes, going to work, pay your rent, sometimes you find it that very hard and challenging when there is a lot of school work and you have to work and be able to manage your bills and but that's life, that's part of life [laughs] that how life is [laughs]

so I don't call those serious challenges because that is how life is [laughs]. It is part of life.

4.3.6 Lack of family

Some participants pointed out that the lack of extended family, especially the aunts, uncles, and grandparents who help in raising children, is a problem. While one is in Saskatoon the responsibility is left to the husband and wife. Jayne explained,

Well, the first thing of course you have family, I mean larger family as Africans we see ourselves in a larger context so, I have family now, like I have my husband and my son but you miss the larger connection you know the extended family members so that is something that you face and probably you continue to face. It's a challenge to us raising a child in that connection because if I was at home the child, my child would have the aunts, the uncles, the grandparents to take care of him but now is between I and my husband to make sure that and every other aspect, you know if I was at home he would have some responsibilities of raising a child will be transferred to some people but you know we have to bring up to adapt to the society ... to be able to grow up in this society but also to remind him where he comes from but also to grow him in his faith. So, that's all a challenge. Because that responsibility is left to two people to do it and the two people also have other responsibilities you know I am employed, at this point my husband is back in school. So trying to balance all those things is quite a challenge. Ah I mean the other thing is just you know trying to be ah mmh, trying to be in a different country with different culture and has a different way of doing things that will continue to be a challenge. And you know fitting in and finding a place in the society will always be a challenge just because of what it is you know yeah.

4.3.7 Sense of isolation

Some participants agreed that they have experienced loneliness, fear, and lack of social life when they arrived in Saskatoon. One participant who didn't want to be mentioned by name said that due to loneliness she suffered depression which led her to be admitted to the hospital. Ade Olu said,

Ah, well challenges... one that I don't think anyone of us can ever get used is cold weather. We will continue to hope that we will adapt so that is strong but take it as a kind living challenge. Beyond that is the sense of isolation, coming from a culture where everybody is brother and sister, doesn't have necessary to be relatives before you care for each other. You can get out of house eight in the morning and not return until is nine at night, not you are messing around the streets but you are visiting from here to there or someone sees you from the way home and takes you some place. You know, so we are just missing that.

Adeline adds, "Oh Canada is great, but sometimes is boring and difficult to live

because in Africa we had our special manner to do things but here you are like alone, nobody else. You look at on yourself, working, you have no time to socialize with other people and you have to let life continue after that.”

4.3.8 Lack of employment, underemployment for sake of survival

Some participants expressed their disappointments and frustrations in looking for employment in vain. Some have good educations and possess PhDs and yet they are jobless. For those who are employed, it is not in the areas of their professions. Some acknowledged that the job is just for survival, for paying the bills. Tumo said,

Ah mmh it is a because is a individualistic society, I came from Africa, you know there people can suggest ways like if you are facing a problem, you will always find someone there who can volunteer with suggestions, guide you. Here because everybody, everybody is in their own [laughs] so it is you do what you need, like everything is there but no one who tells you what to do or suggest or advice you what to do, it is you to discover it by yourself. So, it was a kind of challenge for me and it is still a challenge. And another one is I don't say it is racism but it is being a black is always underestimated even if I have a PhD I'm treated; treated just like anybody else, they still feel like in my department they still feel like you don't know as much as they do. Sometimes it is kind of frustration, it is frustrating yeah.

4.3.9 Lack of welcome in Saskatoon

Some participants have not felt welcomed in Saskatoon and it doesn't matter how long they have been in Saskatoon. Some perceived that the people of Saskatoon are preoccupied with themselves, so if you do not belong to their group you are not welcomed. Deng Jok said,

Saskatoon is a very large community so regardless of how long I have been here there are places I feel welcomed and places I don't feel welcomed. So, ah different people's perceptions are different so it is very varied and when you step out of the house you just do not know who you are going to meet, if they will be welcoming or not, so that is a great challenge. Because you just don't know and you never get to understand why some people are not friendly. ... No, it is the culture. You may want to know somebody but they will not welcome you into their lives. That is a great challenge, you want to talk to people but you don't feel that they want to welcome you in. They will give you one answer response and they can be dismissive as well. It is a great challenge it doesn't matter how long you have been around.

He added,

Ah, I would say that is my greatest challenge. And of course, as well being in school until you do something better, people's perceptions are always different. There is some sort of judgement that is obvious until they get to know who you are. Having been brought up in a respectful and caring background, I respect everybody

regardless of where they come from, regardless of what they look like, I don't give you respect simply because you have attained a certain level of education, I don't use that as a measure to give respect or to relate to fellow human being. Relationships should just be open, yes.

Mama added, "You become [a] tourist attraction, you see a whole lot staring. You know like how different am I, you look at yourself, is just my colour that is different? That is the only thing. Does it mean I am not a human being? Imagine you question a lot of things you like let's say I don't know."

The participants have also faced, and continue to face other challenges that impede their adaptation. Some find everything—lack of money to pay bills, no social activities, and absence of an environment in which to gather with friends and have a cheerful talk—a struggle. International students have had trouble getting student loans. Some participants pointed out that they lack accessibility when they fail to understand the bus system or simply miss buses. They were not sure where to purchase affordable goods or how and where to connect with fellow Africans when new and homesick. The food is different, too. Some expressed disappointment in not being involved in working with the youth; others were aware that they were being judged for their skin colour, and still others needed help with financial planning. Only one participant said she had not experienced any such challenges.

4.4 Challenges adapting to worship in Saskatoon

The following are some of the challenges the participants felt that hindered them, specifically with reference to adapting to the style of worship in Saskatoon:

4.4.1 Lack of sense of belonging and welcome in the church

Some participants felt that they are not welcomed and lacked a sense of belonging in the Catholic churches in Saskatoon. They experienced racism and discrimination in the church too. Some observed that during the sign of peace, when people shake hands or hug, some members shake only the tips of the newcomer's fingers while others pretend they have not seen the newcomer. Sarah stated,

I think too is still the same challenge, the challenge I mentioned earlier on, yeah because I mentioned earlier on when I came we had to go to many, so many Catholic churches. I mean to be able to configure out the one that is really welcoming, you know, so we went to all these three, Holy Family, we went to STM, we went to St. Joseph and we came to Our Lady of Lourdes. Our Lady of Lourdes is like a community, people they are really, really even, though most of them are probably old but it is good. And because of that people come all the way,

there are people who are in Martinsville who come there, Warman who come there, is good because of the way it is. When we are done with mass, we come out, we chat they say, Hi! Hi! Yeah, it is really good.

4.4.2 Work schedule and prayer, balancing church time, and academic life

Some participants explained that they find it difficult to practice their faith because of their work schedule, academic life; finding time to allocate for prayer/church is difficult for them. Some felt that working on Sunday is a challenge, since Sunday is a sacred day after six work days. For example, Gozmok pointed out,

Work schedule and time for mass, yeah, yeah that is another challenge. That is another big challenge because sometimes it's you sometimes who to try to juggle your work schedule even your school schedule with going to church. Sometimes you are scheduled to work, you know it crushes with the time of going to church then you are left to this dilemma, should I forget work and go to church. And you know when you going to think of it, work is very important but still so ... yeah, you have to survive and you cannot tell a person you cannot go to church. Yeah is a major challenge.

4.4.3 Lack of means of transport to church

Three participants mentioned that they lacked a means of transport to attend Sunday liturgy and they are not able to drive. Moreover, the bus system is not reliable on Sundays. As Adeline mused, "Mmh sometimes means, I lack means of transport to go to church and also connecting buses."

4.4.4 Lack of involvement of young people in church activities

Some participants, especially the young interviewees, felt that there are no events to keep the student members together, or to attract young people to attend the Catholic Church, and some young African Catholics withdraw and go to Protestant churches where they are more involved and welcomed. Imeah recalled her experience at the Catholic chapel at St. Paul's College in Winnipeg, where African elements were integrated into the regular Sunday mass:

Ah, yeah in some way, I just compare when I was worshipping at St. Paul's like Winnipeg, like my attending mass here, like in Winnipeg we had that let us say, African community in a regular mass like, it did have to be only during like African mass here. So, we had community doing like regular St. Paul's mass like which makes more interesting like activities like really, we do it. Like we go for rosaries, like I was really involved in St. Paul's, than where I am, eh because of ah, the most of the time I don't get, should I say actually there was no connection like, I really don't feel connected with the church here like, I yeah. I can't place my hands why it is so but I feel like I am not really connected like to church here, the way I was

connected to the church in Winnipeg.

She added,

Mmh, yeah, In St. Paul's we have people baptized as students. Every year you have students because is a community you want, the way you want to be involved in the community and you have students who say I want to be baptized, I want to have my first communion, I don't have my confirmation and because that feeling of I am part of this community, I want to be in choir, I want to be part of this community. You have students every year coming for asking for catechisms. We used to have like bible study, like Sr. Helen, has bible study class. Yeah, we have bible study and we have student come for bible study, you know, after bible study we are going to have a coffee house where we can sing and dance, and other stuff unlike here. It makes you feel much at home.

4.4.5 Lay people serving as Eucharistic ministers

For some participants, it was a shock to see lay people serving as Eucharistic ministers. In their own countries, some were used to seeing only priests, Reverend Sisters (nuns) or deacons serving the Holy Communion, like Gozmok:

Oh yeah, like when I came here the first time I came to STM Mass I found it difficult to understand how things are done here because it was actually my first time of seeing a non-like, a non- will I say a non-priest and non-Rev. Sister sharing communion like [laughs] just a lay person giving a communion that was really weird to me. You know and just seeing ordinary people going walking around on the altar accessing the tabernacle that was, like back in Nigeria that was like no this are made for people like the reverend fathers and reverend sisters who you known who have committed themselves to that work of God yeah but it was really hard for me to overcome. I have come to overcome [laughs] and I believe is how the systems work here ... It was like a psychological shock [laughs].

4.4.6 Lack of people of same faith

One participant mentioned that lack of having people of same faith for motivation can lead one to become a "bed-side Catholic," just getting readings online while on bed. Nakato recalled that it was a challenge:

Finding people of same faith. Yeah, okay for me I was fine, but I can see a scenario where if you (a new person), do not have a support system/friends to motivate them then they may fall. It is a cold country and you need some type of motivation to attend church and not be a bed-side Catholic! I also think not knowing people was a big problem. We were never asked, who are new students, and we were never introduced to any system. So, I did not feel like part of the community for some time. Most people just come attend mass and just walk off because they do not know people. If there is a thing I would borrow from a Protestant church, is whenever they have someone new in town they introduce them, and they feel

wanted and welcomed to be part of community. Human instinct you want be part of something. Like a place where people will be like mingle with new student and have coffee. It took me a long time to know people not necessary that I did not want to but there was no platform for that.

Other challenges mentioned included the lack of commitment by some Africans and the difficulty of dressing for church in winter. However, two participants said they did not have church-related challenges because of the universality of the Catholic mass which is celebrated the same way all over the world.

4.4.7 Does the availability of the STM African Catholic Mass help you deal with these challenges?

Thirty-five percent of the participants felt that the African Mass has not helped them to deal with the challenges they have been going through. For instance, Useni said, “Well, [laughs] availability of STM African Catholic Mass helps me deal with these challenges. Ah well, I, I don’t think so [laughs] I don’t think so because at the end of day, is I who have to make sure that, I have to go to work, so [laughs] I don’t think so [laughs].” Themba added, “Ah, I don’t think, as I said earlier, it is not an excuse but I did find it hard to balance school and attending church. And I don’t think it really, really helped me at all.”

Fifty five percent felt that the availability of the STM African Mass has helped them to deal with challenges they face while in Saskatoon in the following ways: a feeling of connection, preaching in African context that leads to deeper and clearer understanding of message, relief of homesickness, African way of worshipping, sense of family and community, feeling at home in Saskatoon, showing how mass is supposed to be, African virtues and values, lively mass, relatable music, interaction after mass, supporting each other in case of difficulties, togetherness, sense of belonging, celebrating African cultures from different countries, joy, and making friends. For instance, Deng Jok said,

Yes, the African Catholic Mass, yes it has definitely helped me to overcome the sense of, I would say rejection because when you can’t talk to church members that is typically rejection. But being a member of African Catholic Mass everybody is welcome and members’ interaction has got nothing to do with those who are already employed in the workforce, those who are students at various level may be at the university or high school or elementary school, everybody is so much welcome as just I had mentioned is not just a community. It’s very much a family and everybody try to find out how everybody is doing and if they have any challenges that they need help with, so it just gives ah that sense of belonging. It gives you a feeling that somebody cares and that is very important because life is

very challenging in this part of world, not having immediate family here or people to talk to whenever you have some challenges. And yes, having the African Mass at STM has significantly helped me and others as well.

Nakato added, “About homesick maybe yeah. It helps with homesick, been an African Mass it kind of gives you a bit of flavour of how it was at home. So, it does help for homesick for me. I can’t think of anything else.”

5.1 Suggested solutions to church leaders

The participants made the following suggestions to church leaders to assist African newcomers in overcoming spiritual challenges.

5.1.1 Presence and availability of church leaders

Participants suggested that church leaders (priests) and the broader Catholic community need to be more present, available, and provide for temporal needs for African newcomers to enable them to settle easily. It was suggested that they can borrow that aspect from non-Catholic churches. Maria suggested,

Mmh, I will suggest that, just like we have here chaplains, chaplains that look after the spiritual and temporal welfare being of immigrants, because mmh, because of different cultures, and different backgrounds, we are all different. So, we need people of the same culture to look after the immigrants and that is what is happening here at Saskatoon, like Fr. Iheanyi, Fr. Peter, and all those priests that come from Africa, eh, they come here to offer Mass, so it’s good, the temporal aspect of the immigrants to be taken care of. I will also suggest that, that eh, more, the priests to be more, more present to the immigrants, to the people that are coming in, we can take a clue from a non-Catholic group, like if there is a, a member of their church coming they will go, to the airport, pick the person, take the person home and make sure the person is comfortable and then if there is any needs, they try to attend to it as a community. If the person needs space, they try to provide the space wherever they can get, and then they keep their members for as long as they are able to, so as to enable them to adjust and settle very well. So, I think the Catholic Church also needs to do that, because the Catholic Church is losing a lot of people to those people, and is because those people are more available, they are more present to those members, because if you ask them why are they running to other places, they will say those people are more available to them. Yeah.

That is, although the majority of interviewees valued the spiritual services offered by the African Mass, these services need to be supplemented by practical settlement services offered not only by the STM community, but by the local Catholic parishes, Catholic and non-Catholic agencies.

5.1.2 Diversity and inclusiveness

Some participants called for unity in diversity and inclusivity in the Catholic Church. There is a need to have a multicultural aspect of worship in the Catholic Church to embrace inclusion instead of separation. This will help newcomers to have a sense of belonging in Catholic Church instead of changing their denomination. Imeah said,

The thing, ah, we all know that the Catholic Church is a universal church like yeah. So, I feel, there should be diversity, like, I am not telling them like, I am not saying that they should do away with Canadian way of doing things but I feel, there should be diversity in church, yeah, even on regular masses. Because I have friends who were Catholic back home, but when they come to Canada, they stop being ... Catholic because they are like oh, mass is too boring, is not the way back home, so you know stuff like that. Yeah, sometimes I feel bored. Yeah, coming for mass is not the way back home, so I just if I advise them there should be diversity in the church, like. I know they try to encourage, graduate students to participate in church activities, or do stuff like that but, maybe when it comes to the music, and the stuff like that here, there should be more diversity yeah. I know most Catholic African students that were Catholic back home, when they come, they feel, okay, it is too boring. I don't think I want this oh, go like Redeemed Christian church of God and because, you know Redeemed still maintains. It is a Nigerian church, and they maintain, like the way it does things back home, so you prefer okay, I can't today. I feel it should be more diversity yeah, maybe. Yeah.

She added,

At St. Paul's [University of Manitoba] we had sisters. Like Sr. Helen, was welcoming to the students, to the international students. There, the Catholic student movement is very strong. New students are given orientation, have organized mentors who are volunteer peer mentors and you meet every week, you talk. St. Thomas [More] Catholic is not known to the students, they need to offer to take students around, have someone to help in class registration. Newcomers need someone to talk to because one may feel frustrated, bored, someone to help them work hard, that is why the international students do not do well during the first year of their academics. I remember when I was in Winnipeg, I volunteered to help someone from Nigeria, she was young and felt homesick and I helped her to settle.

5.1.3 Youth activities

Some participants suggested that the Catholic Church should create youth activities to engage and attract the youth, for example, basketball, soccer, and youth clubs. This will help them to be committed to church activities, to have a moment of prayer, and empower young Africans. For instance, one participant confessed that he is one of the young people who don't go to church regularly when in Saskatoon. Useni said,

The other thing is also like to ensure that, one of the things that involves the newcomer because is like when we talk of what we know most of the elders like going to church,

most of the elders go to church, the big challenge is young people. When young people come back home in Africa actually they always keep to go to the church every Sunday but when they arrive here you find that, they try not to go all the time I am one of them. I should [laughs] not point fingers on others, I am one of them [laughs]. One of the things is like creating activities that keep these youths when they come to Sunday create activities like maybe after mass activities, maybe like youth programs activities or go and go play volleyball or go play basketball or go and play soccer. Programs for youth like after mass programs, like evening time, be called like the youth club, choir association something like that. So, that in that way you attract more of the youths out there to come actually and join the program. By coming to participate in these activities, it also gives them a chance like to come and listen to the word of God and once they listen to it, it goes directly to their minds and digest it and they can make it a use of it, that's they can make right choices.

5.1.4 Educating newcomers about Canadian culture

Some participants mentioned a need of to educate newcomers about the Canadian culture to adjust faster. For instance, Rich said,

You, some of you are the church leaders I may put it that way. Some of our African brothers and sisters when they come here as newcomers they really don't know much about the society. So, first as I said, it's your responsibility to re-educate them, scout for them, search for them and talk to them, share some of these interviews with them and then try to educate them that right now they are in different society whereby if they are not careful they will lose roots, they will lose their roots and stuff like that. So, you people have to educate them and to encourage them to be part of STM African Mass by every cost, yes, that is where their roots belong. So, that they can too grow in faith, they can grow in spirit, and they kind of avoid some of these ills that we find in this western world. Yes, whereas they are the people who have made us believe that here is heaven and earth or here is just heaven (claps) and sometimes when you come here you see is contrary. You have to work hard with your other colleague priest and colleague reverend sisters to re-educate them, to teach them that at least as Africans we should adhere to our Africans culture and values.

5.1.5 Need to eliminate racism and discrimination in the church

Some participants suggested that in order to eliminate racism and discrimination in the church there needs to be a proactive effort to make people feel welcomed and have a sense of belonging in the local Catholic churches. Mama noted,

Okay, okay I think throughout I have mentioned having a sense of belonging and being part of the community so by having a welcoming community like when I come to mass and I am new, I should feel part of it. Someone should approach me at the end of mass, someone should notice that this is my first time, I am not a familiar face in the church. There should be that person who will be able to pick me out and say I have never seen you in the church, who are you? You know they should make that effort. And like try to know people and people should be free I don't want to sit in church and during peace time you

are shaking hands with someone and they are behaving as if, people should be free. One thing, we are all human beings, I am not you know like I don't know I think it is an individual thing by seeing people come to church, this is a place of worship (laughs), let everything be just ... opening up yourself you know. You are shaking hands with people and they are not looking at your face and even the handshake is very loose you know things like that. I feel a lot needs to be done, like the Catholic Church should be welcoming. The Catholic Church has to be different, like when you go to other churches you can tell, you see the difference and you'll appreciate what I am talking about. Like when you go to Elim [church], the kind of welcome you get there.

5.1.6 Bible study groups

Some participants suggested that bible study groups, a charismatic movement, and/or a faith group should be started to encourage members. There is also a need to integrate newcomers through organizing lots of spiritual talks and bible seminars. For instance, Ade Olu said,

Another way I think we can help newcomers settle is to be out there and be active, let them know that there is Catholic community, we are active, we are not, I was mentioning this to the president of African Mass. I think, we need bible study group and I am honestly 100% ready for that and my house will always be welcomed to be used, because we just come for mass and we go. Those are some of the areas where some of our fellow brethren who are not Catholic attack us. We don't know the bible, we just, most Catholics don't know that we need to have the bible, they think that have a missal, I have rosary and life is good. How can't you have not a bible, how can't you know to pray outside Hail Mary full of grace, and then you have prayed, no you have not prayed, those are devotional prayers. Need to know how to pray with communion with your God. Those are aspects that I think we should also introduce, embrace, and maintain you know into our African Catholic community. Otherwise, we complain that we find mainstream Catholicism worship boring but we are not different if we also don't, because back home there is charismatic, there is faith group, bible study, there is a catechism, there is always one thing you go for. So, if we did that back home and here we are not doing, then we are hypocrites just personal.

5.1.7 Communication, identifying new members, and providing information

Some participants suggested that there should be clear communication with the settlement organizations in Saskatoon such as the Open Door Society and the Global Gathering Place to alert the church about African Catholic newcomers by giving them the necessary contacts. The leaders should not just wait for the newcomers to come to church. They should try to identify the new members, share experiences, and provide information to the newcomers on how to settle in Saskatoon and obtain the necessary documents like the social insurance number. For instance, Anashe stated,

If we can have togetherness, then ask if there is any newcomer from Africa and take that communication to the Open Door society it would be better because it will be hard to know

without the information. There are communities like Global Gathering, they help newcomers, Open Door Society just to mention a few. Maybe we can plan something like a community to do what, to send a message, if any Catholic let us know, just send a newcomer who is coming and is a Catholic, as the Muslims they do that ... Yeah, they do that in Saskatoon. And you can ask there and they will contact you. You just give contact address, tell us if there is a newcomer from Africa and we can help them as you have experience. I have experience and we can help them. Don't wait to see a newcomer in the church no, do something also to help your newcomer who is coming.

5.1.8 Commitment

Some participants pointed out that African newcomers themselves need to be more committed because the church has given them an opportunity to have a worship service that reflects their home continent. Jayne argued,

So, what I think is just a commitment you know even if you came on this Sunday and you don't know the songs, songs are written down. Sometimes I just hammer around for the songs that I don't know but that doesn't mean that I cannot be able to celebrate the mass, I just hammer around and the ones I know I sing along. Ah so I think we have been provided an opportunity is up to us, the challenge is really up to us is not to the leadership. The leadership has given us the opportunity to do what we want. So, they have done that what we need to do is to come together as a group and try to see how we can sustain this yeah. The challenge is up to us. Is not the leadership, the leadership, STM has provided us a place, the bishop has said yes you can do this so the top and the STM has giving us the church, has given up all the other things to help us celebrate this mass. So, the challenge is us ourselves bringing ourselves and making ourselves sustain the whole thing and we can't wait for somebody else, you know that is the problem we have, we wait for somebody else to come and do it. There is no somebody else yeah.

5.1.9 Publicizing the African Mass

Some participants pointed to the need of reminders and announcements about the African Mass more frequently in the regular STM Mass (which is held both on Sundays and weekdays during the academic year), encouraging people to attend. Nakato said,

But, I think they should announce it in the regular mass day that there is an African Mass and we encourage people to attend and we have it every so often, and put it in the bulletin, let it be part of the system. Let it be part of the regular one because there are people who have no idea of how it is. The second thing I guess is to encourage even the non-Africans to attend it. I don't know how practical ... Yeah, they don't know that it exists. It is never announced.

Other suggestions are as follows: ensure that the newcomers are settling in a conducive and peaceful environment; help them stay out of trouble; acknowledge the existence of the newcomers even at regular masses; integrate newcomers by having free spiritual talks and bible

seminars; bring families together to eliminate rejection in the church; church leadership should educate members about the importance of each member; members should make sacrifices for the growth of the church; church members should take time to listen to the newcomers.

5.2 Suggestions to help newcomers in general

5.2.1 Initiative in asking questions

Most participants suggested that newcomers should take the initiative and feel free to ask a lot of questions for clarification and to be helped. put it this way: “What I will say is, just ask questions, ask questions, you see somebody, like you, ask questions, approach the person, greet the person, ask questions, they may have something, they may have advice to share with you so it is good to ask questions yeah.” Ade Olu added, “They should open their mouth and talk and stop be[ing] intensely proud. I think some of our problems we carry some of the weight in us that we will be dying inside and not talk and so I don’t blame people who do not talk because you don’t know how safe your story is with the person you [talk] to.”

5.2.2 Catholic arrival programs for international students/newcomers

Some participants suggested that the Catholic community offer organized services to newcomers to help them settle more easily. These services would include providing rides to shopping, helping them become familiar with the city, and visiting them to make them feel at home. This kind of initiative can be borrowed from the pastors of the Pentecostal churches. The Catholic Church should make its presence felt and prepare programs for the arrival of international students. Imeah suggested,

Mmh, okay, I am going to give an example like, when an international student comes to Canada, most of them does not know where the Catholic church is, they come around, and they [Protestant churches] offers you like take you to shopping, gives you offers like want offer like ah, maybe like the pastors come around, they want to know where you stay and want to say hi to you, and see how you are doing. I don’t see, I have never see that, heard that coming from Catholic church, like never heard that. Ok, the Catholic Church is organizing like okay, if you are just coming in, we are going to shopping like Saturday, is being organized by Catholic Church, yeah. I have never heard that, so, though, I am, most time, even, I remember a friend was telling me, she is in Saskatoon. She came to Saskatoon for undergraduate. “When I came here, people from Redeemed, they came around and help me that is how I started going like Redeemed, yeah.” Ah, the Catholic Church. I know they have like other things they are doing like helping the refugees, stuff like that. Which are great stuff like yeah, but I feel, yeah, I know they invest their time in many ministries like helping the sick, like which are great things ah, for especially like for international students they should have maybe arrival program

for them, like yeah. Make their presence known on campus like okay. We have just had STM on campus yeah, maybe train first for you guys like. We are here if you need anything that would be of help to anything that would be of assistance like come knocking, we are ready to help something like that. We are ready to help something like that, yeah, which you find other churches, or other agencies, do that, what they are doing, yes first of week of school like the Catholic here. I don't know, maybe like yeah.

She continued,

I think, it is really because most of the time [it is] really hard for people to adapt when you don't have anybody like, just coming from Africa which has a different lifestyle, is very hard, someone to take you around, someone to show this how things are done, most time like even the Catholic Church, they are not there. I feel you have to come to meet them, not them coming to meet you [laughs] that's where I feel like the stories I have heard that I feel come meet us.

5.2.3 On-campus orientation

Some participants urged that the international students should be encouraged to attend orientation on campus. This will help them to know what's going on in campus, what services are available, and how to understand the larger society. Nakato suggested,

Ah, I think for the students encourage them to attend orientation on campus. It really does help if they are around in orientation time because they get to see what is available, what kind of services the university offers, what kind of services can be outlined yeah, I guess. And the university does have a whole week of orientation. So, if it is possible for them to be here I think it is a good thing.

5.2.4 Availability of information

Some participants suggested that the information should be available to the newcomers to help them to stay out of trouble. Gozmok said,

Is like I said the key, one key thing is making information available to the newcomers. The information is actually the key. Some, most Africans they come into this system they don't know how the system works and they just jump to the systems and they start misbehaving and before you know it, they get themselves into troubles. But ah if, if the church leaders should take that responsibility of enlightening people, the newcomers when they come because basic things like let say even owning a credit card. Some people actually think that when they get a credit card is a free gift, so they just get the credit card and start spending [claps], they don't know is something they have to pay back. And before they know they get themselves into huge debts which they find difficult paying so those are the kind of the information they need to know, knowing that this is not a free thing you are getting in something you have to pay back just like simple information like that will really help people to navigate their way within the system.

5.2.5 Laws

Some participants suggested that the newcomers should be ready to learn the laws of the land to stay out of trouble. They emphasize that each newcomer is an ambassador of their home country and they must guard their reputation and identity. Ade Olu stated:

Another suggestion for the newcomers is to learn the laws of the land, laws of the land and stay within the laws of the land. A huge number of us are misbehaving, many of Africans or few I don't know many, some Nigerians or Africans may be from other parts of the world are not doing us as should and we also know that some Africans are presently serving time in prison. And this is not good. This is not giving a good representation of Africa. Unfortunately, that is the news people carry the most. When you are doing great, when Nigerians or Ghanaians or Kenyans or Zimbabweans or South Africans is getting scholarships and topping in their class or getting awards, you don't get that at the news ... Is not in the news or when one African is caught for one crime or other is all over the place and the funny thing is, the good of African community or even a country is when one African is already sentenced or identified with a crime you will be shocked that when you go to street or estate, one of you guys, they don't know where that person is from, I saw on the TV yesterday is African like you or she is African like you, black so all a sudden we are one. It is a good thing if they can identify us with good things or we can correct this. We are the ones to, write this, to rewrite the narrative. They will not do it for us. They will not do it for us.

5.2.6 Commitment to religion

Some participants suggested to the newcomers that they should take their religion seriously and not forget to exercise their faith when in Saskatoon. For faith sustains and keeps people moving during moments of challenges. Mama pointed out,

And more importantly you need to have faith like you have to take your religion seriously in this society because that is another thing too because most of us come you know, just come and religion becomes is nothing while back home is a big deal. Here is not because is just the way the society is like when you are a religious is a crime you know people see as problem you are too spiritual and what is wrong being spiritual I believe is a personal, I don't care you believe in a tree or what so long as you believe in something, for me that is enough. You don't have to believe in my God but I just feel like spirituality is very important honesty that really helped me with all the challenges that I have faced here. But by my faith probably I would be depressed and probably I would have done things like stupid things but I think about oh things happening you just tell yourself is God you know like you just give everything to God and at the right time things will be okay and stuff like that. So your religion is key, I don't care you can be Buddhist but you can be anything because everywhere you go is key and have an open mind as well and you know just do what you need to do I mean. Make sure you don't get into problems

and do the right things you know.

5.2.7 Learning experience

One participant suggested that when the newcomers experience western society, it can be a place of learning and developing themselves as individuals and their own countries. They can learn by retaining what is good in Saskatoon and avoiding what is bad. This will bring improvement and development to their home countries. Chimwemwe said,

I would say that Africans are in minority and will always be minority. There is a lot in this western society that we must learn to help us develop. We should learn the good things of this society and throw away the bad ones. We should not copy blindly and take everything, like everybody goes to the club on Sundays. So, I should also go to the club because everybody else drinks or smokes I should also drink or smoke. We came here for a purpose to learn, which is to take the good to our countries and develop. This is the only way Africa can improve. Therefore, my suggestions to newcomers is to learn and to learn consciously don't learn blindly, learn consciously—be conscious of what you are learning and bear in mind, the objective is to improve the society.

5.2.8 Sense of belonging and accommodation

Four participants suggested that the Catholic Church community members and Caucasian community be more friendly, accommodating, and welcoming to the newcomers, and that new members can be helped to get accommodation through the church to settle easily. Deng Jok said,

Yeah, one of the key things is and I am not very happy to say this, I will say it that first of all is if they don't feel welcome from the members of let me say Caucasian community, and other ethnic groups sometimes are not welcoming ah, a starting point is to meet somebody from your own ethnic community and start building a social group from that point. And eventually one will find where they fit in, and to ignore all that you feel is negative, don't let that bother you at all because when, when somebody comes here, you come here for a reason. Human interaction is important but there is a reason why you are here is to set an eye on the goal beside having those important human interactions and certainly if one person is not welcoming there would be another who would be welcoming and so is to, in that way build a social structure, surround yourself with people who are welcoming, surround yourself with people who are aspired of doing good for themselves, their families and for everybody else. Once you surround yourself with individuals like that you will also do well for yourself and your family and everybody else. Beside that when one is facing challenges you do not withdraw from everybody, you don't withdraw from the society, find somebody to confide in, more than ever you realize that everybody is facing similar challenges. Talk to people, it helps you find a way of coping or yourself should establish a positive way of coping with challenges rather than withdrawing from everybody else that might put you at risk behaviours.

Themba added,

Settling down, settling down it is not easy because usually when someone comes to Saskatoon, they will be in touch with someone here most of the times, some come, those who come without knowing anybody but majority [claps] come when they have contacted somebody. So if someone [has a] friend who is in STM community, they can announce at church, and say, okay, I have a friend coming in from Ghana, from Nigeria, Congo, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, is there anyone who knows any available accommodation anywhere? Is there anyone who knows someone looking for a housemate? You know, I think that's way, because I think settling down is the biggest challenge to newcomers in Saskatoon. To get a place to stay and then you know getting new friends is a challenge but if come to Saskatoon and you have a place to stay and you have these friends who are members of STM community, you know you settle very fast, you get friends very easily, the accommodation is there, it helps to settle very fast. So, the biggest way to help is to getting the new members accommodation.

5.2.9 Welcoming

Five participants pointed out that African newcomers themselves need to be more friendly, accommodating, social and welcoming to other Africans. This will help them adjust faster. Waridi said, “Ah, the Africans in Canada should be more friendly and social, more welcoming yeah. No matter the part of Africa you are from, you see the colour of skin like yours, you just say hi!”

5.2.2.1 Responsible social workers

One participant suggested that there is a need for responsible social workers at the Saskatoon organizations which help people settle and not exploit the newcomers sexually. This is especially important when the newcomers have experienced some degree of trauma in leaving their countries, especially the refugees. For instance, Useni suggested,

Well, the suggestions that I will make is to ensure that when they are actually ah, the organizations that actually like deals with the newcomers, like one of the suggestions, I put is to make sure that, not the same incident, that had to happen already to my family is what my sister is going through should never happen. They should put people who are actually caring about the situations knowing how much these people came from and what kind of trauma and all this kind of something they went through. They need someone who will treat them and guide them, to make sure that they change their lifestyle, like why they are here is to ensure that their kids grow up as a responsible citizens and it starts by the social workers who are dealing with them. And then the next thing is to ensure that when newcomers arrive those social workers they connect them to churches. And also, the other thing is when the newcomers arrive it requires a lot of connections around.

5.2.2.2 Sporting activities

Five participants suggested a need for sporting activities for the young people to enable them grow physically and mentally fit, like Useni: “The other thing that I would say is most of them, like the young children, they require like, they need to be involved in sports, curriculum, like sporting activities so that it keeps them grow healthy and with healthy mind and healthy body because you find it is very hard when you arrive new here, parents are new, they don’t know where to take the children.”

5.2.2.3 Language interpreters

One participant suggested that language interpreters are needed for those who don’t speak English or French. This will enable parents, especially, not to sign the wrong documents and help them to avoid troubles when in the new country. Useni observed,

And, the other challenge is some of them parents don’t know or understand English. So it is the role of the I think Catholic Church if like willing to help the newcomers to ensure that some of them who don’t understand things very well get help from people who are actually willing to help. Like, from the deepest part of their voice not somebody who will go there and not telling these people the right thing, you find someone is signing papers that are not real because he doesn’t understand what is going on and at the end of the day, you find that person is trouble or signed wrong things because he doesn’t understand what is happening. So, the biggest thing is to make sure that how these people learn the language and also and to ensure that their kids are participating in sporting activities so that they may grow up healthier and integrate easily to Canadian society.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed at length the findings of the study from the participants of STM African Catholic Mass. The participants shared openly their experiences, opinions, and ideas about their adaptation and settlement in Saskatoon. The main findings as highlighted are as follows: insufficient help from the Catholic Church in Saskatoon for settlement; lack of awareness of Saskatoon social services run by the Catholic Church; some assistance given, formal and informal, through various Saskatoon agencies, facilitated by the churches through referrals to the appropriate Catholic and non-Catholic agencies.

Also, the findings showed that the participants didn’t get help in settlement from the STM African Catholic Mass in terms of housings/accommodation, employment, and basic necessities. . However, they acknowledged that they have received spiritual services through a community that reminds them of worship at home, comfort and companionship.

From the findings, it was clear from the participants that when they arrived at Saskatoon they were anxious to find a Catholic Church to attend. This is because they agreed that Catholic

faith, Holy Eucharist/Communion, symbols and values, prayers, Catholic tradition/doctrine, attending mass, and spiritual growth are major, important issues in their lives. The participants also highlighted the challenges they faced and still encounter in Saskatoon such as culture shock, racism, under-employment and weather. The participants also suggested possible solutions which can be implemented as discussed above.

The next chapter focuses on the theoretical framework of the study with special reference to the relevance of the interview data to the understanding of culture shock, the “myth” of African religiosity and inculturation. This chapter will highlight the uniqueness of this study, for it discussed at length two phenomena that have not previously been identified by scholars: the specifically religious dimension of culture shock (“religious culture shock”) and a distinctive form of inculturation practiced in the STM African Mass that I will call “interculturalization.”

Chapter Five

Discussion of the Findings of the Study

Introduction

This study was conducted with the main purpose of establishing the role the Catholic Church plays in the adaptation of African Catholic newcomers to Saskatoon. The research was guided by four major research questions: 1) what role does the Roman Catholic Church play in the transition of African newcomers into Canadian society? 2) How important is a religion among African newcomers to Canada and to what extent does the availability of culturally appropriate worship opportunities facilitate their adaptation to Canadian society? 3) What are some of the challenges African Catholic newcomers face as they adapt to worship in Canada and their transition into Canadian society? 4) What are some of the suggestions the African newcomers can give as solutions to the challenges faced?

In order to reach a deeper understanding of the findings and to formulate some conclusions, this study used ethnographic techniques including interviews with members of STM African Catholic Community Mass. The study also used participant observation technique with the members of STM African Catholic community. The sampling procedure used the snowball method to recruit the participants from the members of STM African Catholic Community Mass. The transcribed data was analyzed and presented through themes of the major findings.

The conceptual frameworks that emerged from the study related to frequent themes that arose from the interviewees. These are culture shock theory, the frequent assertion that African religiosity is particularly fervent (“notorious” or “incurable”), and the Roman Catholic theology of inculturation.

5.1 Culture Shock

As mentioned earlier, culture shock is one of the themes emerged in this study. Moving to a new country and adjusting to a new culture and environment can be challenging. At the same time, it is a very exciting and extraordinary experience. According to the interviews, culture shock was one of the major challenges African newcomers face when they come to Saskatoon. Kalervo Oberg, the anthropologist who pioneered culture shock theory, identified four main stages of culture shock, which correspond to the experiences of the interviewees quite

strikingly.⁸ In addition, the interview data revealed that African Catholic newcomers also experience an aspect of culture shock unacknowledged in the academic literature, which can be described as a religious culture shock.

The first stage in Oberg's scheme is the honeymoon phase.⁹ In the early days after arrival, newcomers are excited that they are in a new country with new expectations. Everything seems different from what they are familiar with, interesting, and awesome. From my point of view as a participant observer, I can attest that I experienced the honeymoon stage in a very special way. I arrived in Canada via Calgary, where I found members of a local religious order the Sisters of Charity, waiting for me at the airport. They welcomed me warmly. I enjoyed every moment I was with them for two weeks. They took me to local attractions, I admired the beautiful landscapes of the region, I marvelled at the magnificent mountains at Banff, I enjoyed riding the gondola to the mountaintop. I even attended a rock concert with a youth group. Lastly, we visited the dinosaur park at Drumheller. It was amazing. On my arrival on Saskatoon, my first few days were good and I was happy, before the crisis phase set in, and I quickly had to adapt to a new academic and cultural environment.

I include my own experience since my questionnaire was not designed to capture the initial, honeymoon phase of culture shock. However, in tacit acknowledgment of this initial experience of enthusiasm for the new culture (as reported in a different context above), Anashe recalled a positive experience of finding help to settle when she arrived:

What I can remember is what they teach us on how to settle in this country. They used to send me someone to show me how to take a bus; in my country, we did not have the bus system like here. It was a good experience. Just you have a card and you put there on the machine. The other thing they teach different things; how to go to the bank, how to check the weather changing, how to protect your child. Yeah, it was really ah. It was really good.

Similarly, Waridi mentioned the helpfulness of friends on his arrival:

⁸Some other scholars articulate the stages of culture shock slightly differently from Oberg. For instance, Robert Kohls suggests four stages: initial euphoria, irritability and hostility, gradual adjustment, and adaptation or biculturalism. (L. Robert Kohls, *Survival Kit for Overseas Living: For Americans Planning to Live and Work Abroad*, 4th ed. [Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 2001], 97). Robert Grossman lists six phases of culture shock: Pre-Departure, Honeymoon or Spectator Phase, Increasing Participation Phase, Crisis Phase, Adaptation Phase and Re-entry Phase (Robert Grossman, "What is Culture Shock?" (Kalamazoo College, Center for International Programs) handels.gu.se/digitalAssets/1461/1461859_what_is_culture_shock.pdf accessed 26, January, 2017), 3. However, no previous scholars have identified the phenomenon of religious culture shock.

⁹ Karlevo Oberg, "Culture Shock. Presentation to the Women's Club of Rio De Janeiro" (August 3, 1954), 2 accessed October 21, 2016. [citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.461.5459&rep=rep1...by K Oberg - 1954](https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.461.5459&rep=rep1...by%20K%20Oberg-1954).

We have some friends in Saskatoon that has been so helpful to us yeah. They can just invite us home, get to have supper with them, have dinner with them, have lunch with them, have, ask us if we need anything if want to go for shopping, we are not driving, they just come and pick us we go for shopping. Yes, all that.

The second culture shock stage is the crisis/aggression phase.¹⁰ During this phase, newcomers experience a lot of stress, everything seems to be a struggle. Newcomers start having thoughts of going back to their countries, giving up, feeling bored, homesick. They start developing negative perceptions of the new country. Again, to share my own experience, after the few days in Saskatoon, I started experiencing my crisis. To my surprise, I didn't have the proper study permit to enrol as a student, which I was supposed to have been issued on arrival at the Calgary airport. I had to travel around Saskatoon from one place to another seeking assistance; for instance, the International Student Centre (rather unhelpfully) advised me to fill out an online form and to wait for three months. I tried to fill in the form but I could not submit it online. Then I decided to go back to the Saskatoon Airport where I was immediately issued with a study permit, but with the condition that I could not work. I had to return to the airport so that I could get a permit that would allow me to fulfil my duties as a teaching and research assistant, which, fortunately, I received. I was able now to register for my classes, apply for a Social Insurance Number, and work to support my studies. During those moments of struggle, in the confusion I left all my documents on a bus. After a three-hour struggle, I was able to get them at the downtown terminal office, which was a very stressful experience. In addition, I often got lost in the bus system, found it difficult to be on time, sometimes even found it hard to figure out how to get back to my accommodation, and, despite the early fall weather, wore a winter jacket all day, sometimes even inside.

In this phase, newcomers start comparing the host country with their home countries. For the African newcomers, the weather emerged as a big issue, since Saskatoon is very cold compared to African countries. Rich, for instance, observed,

Well, one of the key challenges, as we all know undoubtedly, is that the weather is really cold here, extremely cold during the winter. When I came, first of all, ... it was close to winter so it was kind of very hard for me to adjust or to adapt but now I am okay. And then secondly there is this culture of young people not really taking church life very serious yeah, even right here in the church where we are I don't think, you can, I think you have noticed yourself that they have not to 50% of the youths here in the church. ... It is really, and some of our Africans brothers and

¹⁰ Ibid., 3

sisters who come here for the first time they don't really like this culture to be kindly with you, they experience culture shock which to them is just that we are already here is hard to go back. But if you have really had to find from some people whether they would you like to go back? They will say yeah.

Themba added,

One, I did not know anybody in Saskatoon. So, sometimes I feel homesick. Then two the weather is totally terrible, and then three the food was completely different. Four the culture is, the culture completely different. How people see things here is different from how it is seen in Africa, here life is very fast pace. If you miss time, it means something is gone. Back home life you lay back, different from our country where you take the time to do things. These are some of the challenges I faced in Saskatoon.

Consequently, everyday life becomes challenging to them and everything seems difficult. Even simple things like boarding a bus can lead to a newcomer getting lost; some mismanage their finances, people around them seem uncaring and unconcerned. Some African newcomers suffer depression, and they do not want to engage in anything. So the interviewees advised newcomers to be prepared for the disorientation and loneliness accompanying culture shock.

Nakato observed,

Ready for culture shock I guess. You feel like you lose track and you are not sure of what you are doing and probably the right thing and first times is very hard especially when you come straight from home and you are bored and will be lonely. There are days they will wish to go back home at some point either because you are bored but it's something you have to learn to live; you need to learn how to be lonely. The first thing we do not come from a culture of ever being alone. One of the biggest things I think I was somewhere to say something it would be to say hey students to accept that you gonna be alone 80% of the time and 20%, that's fine, you will see people but those people will never complete you. You have to accept to be alone. Once you figure out how to be alone, life becomes a little bit easier. Now you are no longer feeling like I am the one who is doing something wrong. Have I become antisocial? It has nothing to do with you as a person. It is the culture here that dictates (laughs) ... So I think that everybody suffers, everybody keeps quiet, and maybe there is something wrong with me. It has nothing to do with you. It is part of us we all feel it because we do not know how to be alone.

Themba added, "Yeah, there is, actually like, you know coming to a place like Canada is really tough everything is different, culture is different, food different, people are different, (clapping) it is very challenging and can be very stressful."

During this moment of crisis, one participant advised the newcomers to beware of sects that can lure them but to be positive minded, hardworking, prayerful and committed to whatever they are doing. Rich advised,

First of all, they should know that they are out of home for the new arrivals, they are leaving their home in Africa; they are coming to the west or western world so that in itself is a challenge and that they are will be meeting a different lifestyle. Here you will not be there to see a white man puts three stones, she or he is trying to turn for food or things like that, everything here is so sophisticated, the system of living is so different and everything. So there should be ah, they should be ready for such challenges that are as far as they, you know the social life is a concern. When it comes to religious life they should be ready that they would also face challenges because there are so many churches out here, the proliferation of so many churches just as we have in Africa. They should be able to know the right church to go to, this is not only to Catholics also non-Catholics they should be able to know which church to attend because most of these things that we hear of sects like that they have their roots here in the western world. Some of those things are just transferred to Africa that the wind is just blowing from here and going to Africa. Most of the sects are found here in the western world. So they should be very careful not to engage in such sects you know ... all in search for power or all in search for money, (claps) because the standard of living is too expensive if you are not very strong you may want to do one or two of dubious things just to make ends meet and stuffs like that. So, they should be again positive minded, they should be hardworking, they should be committed to whatever they are doing, and they should remain prayerful whether they are Catholics or not.

A feature of this stage of culture shock not covered in the secondary literature that arose in the interviews is that African Catholic newcomers experience a specifically religious form of culture shock. African newcomers experience and see things that are done differently in the Catholic Canadian church than what they are used to, evaluate Canadian practices negatively, and find it hard to adjust. For instance, for some Africans, seeing a lay person serving as Eucharistic minister or girls as altar servers is a great shock. As Rich recalled,

And then I have also realized something which puzzles me to this day that we have just left the church, I don't know if it is a new pattern of what I say theology or whatsoever when laity or lay people serve body or blood. I have never seen that in my entire life in a Roman Catholic Church. I am not criticizing though it is strange that the lay person like me, I can just be called to be one server to serve communion and blood. We in Africa or traditionally we know that is the sole duty of the priest or a reverend sister or the revered brother or the deacon. A laity or lay person is not just allowed to move up to the altar and start sharing the Body and Blood of Christ to the worshippers. I didn't see that happen in Rome or Vatican following masses

in Rome or Vatican I have not seen a day where people just laity; layman or laywoman first in short skirts who move up to the altar get the body and start serving to people. I don't know where this culture is coming from. And then the way some of them go up to the altar let's say those who have to take the readings the first and second readings. I don't know what kind of genuflect before going to the readings. They just stroll, read, stroll and come down. It does not happen like that in any African church before you mount the whole thing you go to the altar you have to genuflect or you bow and then climb to go and take the first or second reading. You see someone in jeans just strolls up and read hurriedly strolls down comes down. In fact, you don't feel anything in mass (claps). It likes even at times you get annoyed why did I come because what you see, it's, I don't know if this is like this society is really strong in Roman Catholic, I don't know even in Rome that's another western country let's say well don't say Canada is west even Rome the heart of Roman Catholicism you don't find that. ... Those are the duties of priests or deacons they the ones to do that. So, there are so many things here to me is like a culture shock. Well, I have just said I should not, I will not put so much attention to that salvation has, we say is personal because if you go by what one sees here to me it is already wrong. They have already failed in Christianity, they have already failed to me.

Consequently, African newcomers tend to regard the host people as less religious than they are, and hence feel the need to re-evangelize them. Joel noted,

Well, the core values basically are to preach the good news, I mean bringing about the kingdom of God to all men and women. And empowering our own students, the African Catholic students to equally, they are evangelizers in this foreign land. So that is one of the core values and equally, one other value is, for them to hold to the sense of discipline they got from their background and even that those disciplines fit into Catholic faith discipline. So that they don't lose out and let themselves, you see that people sometimes (get started) and lose the sense of their path so we try to see that they are in the context of their cultural values as well as the Catholic values.

One aspect that makes the African newcomers see the host culture as less religious is that the Canadian Catholic Church does not welcome and accommodate them, which can be interpreted as racism within the church. For instance, Sarah says,

... yeah, you know when people come here yeah, they do like testing (comparison), they have to test, just like what happened to me I compared three churches to see which one is sweeter (laughs), I know a lot of people who are really Catholics but like they have diverted, meanwhile when they were back home, they were Catholic. A number of them who are like that, so I think probably due to racism, the church not been active, probably leads people to withdraw because they wanted something motivating. You know yeah. I think that is, a big challenge, a big issue. They should let people feel welcome in the church, let people feel belonging to the church, you know. And that will help, that will help.

Another aspect of religious culture shock is that African newcomers feel that they are not involved in church activities like they were in their home countries. Some of the activities that they were involved in Africa that they have no opportunity to participate in Canada are praying together with members of the community (some participants said they had prayed the rosary every day), going on retreats, participating in charismatic prayer services for healing and deliverance, and adoring the Blessed Sacrament. Sarah recalled that at home she was very involved in religious activities:

But I always made sure that I go to church every day unless there is something, like a sickness that may prevent me from going, then I wouldn't go. We used to have programs within the church that I was involved in, the Catholic charismatic renewal was one of them. We used to have it every Sunday after church liturgy. Yeah, Besides meeting every Sunday, we have other daily activities that we did such as: we had bible sharing on Monday, we have rosary prayers on Tuesday, Wednesday, youth meetings, Friday, vigil night prayers but before we do the vigil, we always have three days' prayer and fasting, which usually starts from Wednesday to Friday.

She added,

(Laughs), I was the youth leader, and also every first Sunday of the month, the charismatic is scheduled to sing in the main church every first Sunday of the month. Because the church had English and dagaari choirs, but when we sing is always unique accompanied with all musical instruments (both modern and traditional) such as piano, guitar, the shakers, and bass drums ... so it feels like the Holy Spirit is coming down ... Every first Sunday, eh it was a role we go and sing and people always like it very much, like the way we present the songs, it moves people a lot, so yeah.

Similarly, most participants had belonged to different Catholic Church movements as well as clubs in schools, including Focolare Movement, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Joan of Arc, Charismatic renewal, Legion of Mary, Young Christian Workers Students Union, Young Catholic Students, Young Christian Society, Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria, Fish Youth Group, and International Movement of Catholic Students. These movements and clubs motivated other youth members to remain active and involved in church matters. Gozmok recalled,

Yeah, I have so many engagements with the church when I was back home and I don't even where to start yeah. Right when I was in secondary school, I have been very active in the church. I was a choirmaster in my secondary school yeah, I was a choirmaster and then in the secondary school. We had what we call YCS (Young

Catholic Students) yeah. I became the president of the YCS in my school and then from there I became the zonal president and then I became the president of the states, so I was really involved. And then from school going back home after I finished my secondary school I joined what we call CION. CION is Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria. I also became the president of CION in my parish. Yeah, I was quite involved. Then I got some from my university I became very much involved. I was the mass server, what we call altar boys not even back home I was an altar boy. At school I was an altar boy I held a position of secretary and also, while I was in school I was a lay leader. I was the president of lay leader association and my school, Caritas University, I was a member of Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary (laughs). I was also a member of Divine Mercy yeah (laughs). I was a member of there is this new group we formed as what is called it has been a quite a long time I have forgotten the name but it's ah, it has something to do with the sweet name of Jesus. It is a religious group we formed yeah it's been good and you know I have actually gained like you know so much experience in relating and interacting with the youths and members. It has been a wonderful experience (laughs).

Ade Olu added, "Back in Nigeria I was so very actively involved oh my goodness, people call me bishop's son until today. I was a youth leader, I started as youth president in my parish, eventually, I became the president for the deanery then I became the president for the Archdiocese. Then I was involved with the province and I was involved with national youth body. And I was privileged to be the first youth leader to organize an international exchange program for Nigerian youth and Ghanaian youth. So I was, to take youth movement even beyond Nigeria."

Exacerbating the religious culture shock was the lack of connection with the Catholic Church in Canada that the interviewees felt. Fifty percent of the participants said that they do not feel connected to the Catholic Church here in Saskatoon: sometimes they find it boring, the Canadian mass is so quiet, some are not used to the songs in the hymnal, the mass is too short, some priests speak very fast and it is difficult to understand them, some of the songs are boring, people are in a hurry to go home, in some churches the parishioners leave the church before the priest leaves the altar, and for some it was their first time to see girls serving as altar servers. For instance, Rich observed,

The worship aspect, yeah, as I said previously the mass is so quiet. Secondly, I am not used to this their songs in their hymnal yeah so even if I sing I don't feel the spirit in me (claps). Yeah, I don't really feel anything moving in me. Next aspect their mass time is too short, you cannot time a mass that mass start at nine and ends at ten. That is not allowed because mass is something that activity should come in, people are singing, people are dancing, people are praising, you know people are

praising God and stuff like that. And with them here everything is like kind of brief one of the highest. There is no mass I have attended which has gone for one hour, fifteen minutes that could be like the longest mass to them. So, everything to them is like brief, brief, brief.

Yeke added,

Parishioners not getting involved with the liturgy like singing, responding, and parishioners even leaving before the priest just after blessing ... Yeah so, we talked with some people but people don't care they don't see it like a big deal. I tried to make people understand that singing together makes the mass lively but they are not getting involved in singing. I spoke to some of the members that I don't understand why people are in a hurry to go home because back home in Ghana, church service is like two hours and they are like what are you doing for two hours. One of the ladies told me about a program called Live In and that I would like it. I tried it and I love it. It was a spiritual program for three days. When you arrive, you are given an envelope in which you put all your electronic gadgets in it. You are in a room even you don't know what time it is and don't see either the sun or the moon. We have bible talks, seminars for three days and the singing is so lively, the songs are similar to those we sing at the church here they are lively so I keep questioning some of those things because am like how come it's being sung so lovely but then at the regular church it's not. I have been there once and my wife has been there thrice because of work schedule. It always feels good, it is good because they always want more people to be there. You only pay five dollars because there are people who sponsor you for the three days. It is always in Alberta.

Tumo added, "No other challenge except the songs are boring ... For the regular mainstream Canadian but there are songs which are good but most of them are boring, I don't sing I have the book in my hand but I don't sing. I can't sing."

In the recovery stage, the visitor begins to open the way to the new cultural environment. Then, the newcomer develops a better attitude to people of the host country.¹¹ For instance, Ade Olu shared how personable the people of Saskatoon are. He said proudly, "Some of good things, memories that I have, is how personable the church leaders here have been, and how that resonate with my experience ... Very concerned, knows me by name, and then the same is true of Bishop Don Bolen here in Saskatoon, and of course Bishop Albert Thevenot of Prince Albert. These are great individuals would see you and call you by your name and so for me being personable is the greatest service that I can enjoy from anyone." A person's sense of humour begins to exert itself. Instead of criticizing, s/he jokes about the people and even cracks jokes

¹¹ Oberg, "Culture Shock," 3-4.

about his or her own difficulties. He or she is now on the way to recovery.¹² In the case of the African newcomers, they begin to learn the new culture, relate with other people and become more independent. They start to adapt to aspects of living in the new environment (Saskatoon), and also develop a new relationship with people in the host culture. Also, for instance, some interviewees reminded other newcomers that they should accept the fact that they are here and that they are in a new place, a different continent, and try to adjust to life here in Saskatoon. The newcomers should try to connect themselves with people who have been in Saskatoon for some time so as to be able to overcome their daily struggles of life. Jayne advised,

I think the first thing is just accepting that you are in a new place and try to dance to the beats that you find yourself in. That is the first thing. The second is that you are going to places where people may look at you and make decisions about who you are basing on how you look like but really you know the true self of who you are. So go back to what is inside of you and see you that life even in Africa we do these things that you are from that tribe you are from this tribe. We do these things we just don't recognize that but the difference here is that people do it based on how you look like outside ... But I cannot change the colour of who I am you know that is who I am. So, those I guess are the challenge that a lot of people come, we have a very different view of how this place it is and then when you come here you get and realize how difficult life is here. And the thing is just connecting yourself to other people who have been here if you have an opportunity to talk to other people sometimes other people are not willing to talk to you but if you are you have an opportunity to connect with other people who are willing to connect to you connect to the other you realize that you are not alone. The struggles are very common. Even the people who have succeeded they have succeeded through hard work yeah. And just remember who you are and why you are here and focus yeah. I mean that is the whole points of it just focus. You will face challenges, it will be hard but I think Africans are used to hardships yeah, that is we are used to hardships and therefore we rise up to any challenge. It is unfortunate that we don't translate it into our society into but we rise up to challenges so we can. And so, the idea is just to take every day as it comes and try to keep your mind, your eyes on the prize because the people who went before you and they have done something so you will also do something.

In addition, some participants suggested to newcomers that they should be open-minded to learn about the new culture for easier adaptation and remember to remain focused on the main reason they are in Saskatoon. Mama stated,

I always say you know, to be open minded you know like let them be open minded in everything in this society. I remember when my cousin made a decision to come here I told her, don't think like that when you come here you get a job immediately

¹² Ibid.

but have a plan if I don't get a job or how I am going to survive? And like if I don't get a job in my field what I am going to do? So, you have to be open-minded and be ready for anything that is the only way you can survive in this society.

Finally, in the adjustment phase,¹³ the newcomers start to adapt to the new culture, embrace its differences and accept what it has to offer. This phase brings a sense of satisfaction, accomplishment, and personal growth for having overcome culture shock and also a readiness to help others to adapt to live in the new country without counting the limitation. Some participants advised the newcomers to put in an effort and to try harder to adapt. Mama said,

You know it's that you know someone has to keep going sometimes people want to give up. You know I have been in a situation like that where you feel like you want to say all is lost you know. I still have no job in my field but I keep going like you just have to be happy and pretend nothing is happening because at the end of the day it's life. You have to make life really ... all those things are good but for the individual, you just have to, you know just keep going and that's life we all have our challenges, you just have to keep the vision.

Gozmok added,

I can remember that you know that experience of meeting people from the same country with you and then relating and in your local dialects and sharing experiences back home you know that's there is that feeling of not as if you are back home. Sometimes it makes start missing home but seeing all those people and knowing that you have so many in commons, having many things in common it makes you feel at home too.

Several interviewees encouraged newcomers to be conscious that they are in new place, to seek advice, and guidance on how to settle easily since life is not the way it appears when they arrive. The participants also encouraged the sharing of experiences to help newcomers to adjust, adapt and settle easily. OJ advises,

Talk to people around; you cannot just come and jump over things and you need to talk to people who have experienced living here before. Not just people who were born here, but people who came here many, many years ago, and started a life. You are started now, and those from your country talk to them. Those people have invaluable advice; they can lift you and help you on how to plan too. You can't sit down on yourself and decide. You need to talk to people and often times you get good advice and good like we mention on how well to plan in this place and because, obviously, it's not like where you are coming from. Living here is not like the way you lived where you are came from. So, we need to talk to people around us and ask people questions. It is easier said than done; it is hard to get people to ask questions. I am not saying it is very easy how do I know? It is even

¹³Oberg, Culture Shock, 4.

hard to find people to talk to. Because people are very busy doing other things so but anyhow look for a way to get someone in the church in your school at the place of your work just look to someone to talk to. Preferably someone who moved here many years ago might have some answers for you.

Tumo added,

Ah, mmh, may be experienced people within the church, who have lived here longer and who know about the system maybe they can help Africans coming to Canada for the first time and help them connect. Because most of them when you come here, the cultural shock, don't like, says things you watch on TV about the western world when you come it is completely different from them. So, you become shocked you feel lonely and things don't connect so if we can have people in our church who can help these people like after explaining things to them, show them where to go where they need help, it will be useful.

5.2 African Religiosity

As mentioned earlier, John Mbiti's observation that Africans are "notoriously religious" has been highly influential on the scholarship on African religion. Speaking of African traditional religions, Mbiti observes, "Africans are notoriously religious, and each people has its own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices. Religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it."¹⁴ In addition, Mbiti notes that group activities are essential to any religion. Religious practices show how people express their beliefs in practical terms. They include praying, making sacrifices and offerings performing ceremonies and rituals, observing various customs, and so on. Festivals are normally joyful occasions when people sing, dance, eat and celebrate a particular occasion or event.¹⁵ From the evidence provided by the interviewees, this quality of religiosity is clearly illustrated by the newcomers' recollections of extensive engagement in religious activities in their African countries. The participants declared that back home, they had spent a great deal of quality time in church activities to meet the demands of their personal piety. All of the participants describe themselves as having participated in church activities daily. The participants openly shared their African experiences of religious activities with reference to youth activities, going to bible studies, choral singing, prayer meetings, liturgical dancing, performing works of mercy, and involvement in church-related social life.

¹⁴ John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 2nd ed. (London: Heinemann, 1990), 2.

¹⁵ John Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 2nd ed. (London: Heinemann, 1991), 11.

First, most of the participants shared that they had belonged to youth groups either at the high school, at university or in their own parishes. They went to youth meetings and various youth activities that made them active and engaged. Yeke remembered,

Oh yeah, I was involved with a lot. First, I was a mass server. We had a lot of youth groups. I was a member of the students union, Mass servers union and Catholic Organization for Religious Advancement (COSRA). I held a lot of positions. Like one time I was a sacristan, then became president and you know back home you have the parish, you have the deanery, you have the archdiocese. At a point in time, I was the Mass server's president for the Parish, the deanery as well as the Archdiocese. Like one time I was part of the parish council, I was assistant secretary for almost two years, let me say almost four years. And then in the youth, I was involved with the youth the parish council. In students union, one time I was the organizer, then I became the president. Then servers too like I was the president and at the same time, I was the parish youth council president and in the deanery, youth vice president as well. I was involved with the youth all until I moved to Canada. You know the youths are the future big activity with the youth which was involved like in the parish council so I was much involved.

He added,

Oh, the youth members we had a lot of activities like my parish eight different youth groups so the parish council meet and every youth groups bring their program for the year and then the youth council will review it and approve it. The youth council has a program where the youth have to attend so you make sure the programs do not conflict with each group. The youth council has a lot of programs like meetings, and then we have bible studies. We also invite people to come to talk to the youth, on leadership courses that we organize every year. We also had games just to bring the youths together. During public holidays, we organize social events at the parish to engage the youth instead of them going out with their peers to either get drunk or get themselves involve with some bad activities. The youth groups are the core of volunteers in the parish. For example, most of the work at the parish is allocated to each youth group on a monthly basis. Let say for the month of July, Young Christians workers will be in charge of mounting canopies, then mass servers you arrange chairs, so every group gets a portion of the job. There were a lot of activities all the time.

In addition, some participants mention having actively participated in bible studies in Africa. Nakato noted that here in Saskatoon, she must attend a non-Catholic Church for bible sharing: "I have friends and I think as Catholics we don't have too many bible study groups and bible study is something I enjoy so I go for Seventh Day Adventist bible study." Some participants enjoyed reading scriptures during Sunday liturgy.

As expressive of their distinctive religiosity, African newcomers describe the people who go to the STM African Catholic Mass as a community. Africans have a sense of community living and there is nothing like being alone back home. Everything that Africans do involves other people. It is hard to separate the African way of living from their religion. For instance, Mbiti explains, “African religion is found in all aspects of life ... it influences all areas of life.”¹⁶ All 20 interview participants (100%) saw the STM African Catholic Mass as a community. Members of STM share many activities, thus enhancing their spiritual welfare and strengthening their communion: visiting and praying for the sick, having a sense of family, holding social events (anniversaries, weddings, barbecue) creating friendship and relationship, having mutual support, being caring, having a sense of belonging, being each other’s keeper, and making personal sacrifices.



Priests during the celebration of 10 years of one of the priests’ anniversary and sharing a meal



STM African choir singing during the priest’s anniversary; after celebration of mass

¹⁶ Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 29.

More emphatically, some participants felt that the members of the African community are particularly loving and compassionate since they are willing to visit sick members or members who have lost loved ones. When they visit, they comfort, share bible verses, sing songs related to the occasion, and pray over the individuals concerned, as Useni summarized,

Yeah. I describe it as a community, as friends, as brothers, we are trying to have a spirit of like how to live in a community of peace-loving people. So, I describe it as a community because as a community has friends, has a family. Because one time I was sick and admitted in University Hospital like almost I think two weeks yeah. So, they went there all the choir members, so they went there and visited me and prayed for me there. So, I feel like as part of my family, part of life. So, they are also like a community to me, that's how I describe it.

Anashe added, "Yeah. Because I remember when I lost my mom, my mom passed away you [Sr. Rosemary and other members] came to visit me because you knew me through the African Mass. It is a community too. It is a good community."

Most participants said that they see the STM African community as a family, where they are free to interact with each other and gather together without suspicion. Deng Jok noted,

Yes. We see each other as members of a family more than anything else. It is not just another church member you say hey and see you next week. It's a family, we discuss with each other, the progress that people are making in their lives, the difficulties and challenges that they are facing and if we have any suggestion we would give them or direct fellow members where they could receive these services when they feel they are having challenges. So, it is a community, more than a community it is a family, yes.

In addition, some participants mentioned social events that African Mass members do together apart from worship activities that help them to be a community. These social events include barbecues and potlucks. Here, the members come with food from their own countries and they share together. These social events create room for more interaction, togetherness, having fun, and making jokes. The members come together to celebrate the life of a newborn, rejoice with members who are graduating from university, marriages of members and wedding anniversaries, among other life events. Sarah said, "Yeah. I think we are a community, in a way because sometimes we get together, you know, we have coffee together, we have barbecues together, you know, if somebody has like a problem like times of death or something, people go there to visit, yeah is all part of community as well." Tumo added, "Yeah, we do have barbecues,

we do other activities like when someone graduates, we come together and when someone marries people are invited to attend, funeral[s] too.”



Baby and her mother after blessing in the church; Baby dedication after baptism;



Preparing to pray for graduates of June 2016; the graduates; one of the graduates being prayed for

Also, the members of the STM African community sang during the celebration of the 90 year anniversary of the Newman Club at STM College. They sang three songs with the following meaning (see Appendix 6) for the lyrics.



African choir during 90th Anniversary Newman; Christmas carols; Sharing potluck after Christmas carols

Some participants observed that the STM African community provides room for friendship and creating relationships among the members. The members are able to maintain their connections, come together, and share ideas. Some participants acknowledged that they find it is easier to interact with the priests and Reverend Sisters at the African Mass because it is a community. Brother D explained,

We are in a community, in the sense of personal friendship and interactions. And then we are I think we all should go for being for each other is something we have in the recent case that we had.¹⁷ I have seen like many people who came those who were there by the time it happened and those who were not in Saskatoon when they returned they still visited. In a community, there are people who know each other and come to each other's aid when there is a problem. But, the minute you help each other so somebody can settle in Saskatoon or have an idea when somebody is looking for the way of renewing immigration documents in Canada I mean you can give one credit about it. Third I don't know if [other] people help each other in these other ways but we know at least we know each other, we gather here and in my own case when we had a problem people came yeah. And really that's a community.

Mama added,

Yeah, I think is a community, I think is a community because like I just mentioned it is small so we know pretty much everyone and it is easier to interact even with the priests and reverend sisters and everyone and in that sense I would say is a community and I don't know what goes on at, I am no more a student but I guess it is easier for student to interact, even get help from each other and stuff like that like academically and whatever.

With regard to mutual support, some participants agreed that they can support one another as members of the community in case of any misfortune. The members are contacted and

¹⁷ In the recent case of loss of a family member, the members of African Catholic community were able to visit the family.

informed through phone calls, text messages or emails. They can be together, share experiences, and give information that benefits other members. The members see each other as diverse people coming together, committed to growth and development for members, looking for ways of helping each other, and listening to each other. As Maria puts it, “Yeah, we are a worshipping community, I think we are a worshipping community ... we are diverse people, coming together, committed to each other’s growth and development, and looking for ways of helping each other, be present to each other, seeing each other as members of one family, one family in the Lord, and then one family from a different continent, yeah.”

Further, some participants described the members of the STM African Catholic community as caring and as having a sense of belonging. The members cherish each other, try to encourage one another, and are concerned about each other. Ade Olu said,

Yes. We are a community, we connect, we check on each other where we can and, like any other family, we are not perfect. Sometimes people are too busy to check on you not because they are neglecting you, everybody is trying to get into Canadian culture and get work done because the bills are not going to stop coming. We are a community at the end of the day. We care about each other, one of us, we are all just at his house on Monday for his house warming and picture view. He was in Ghana, he was recently in Ghana for his wedding. We were all there, we have not seen the wife in person but we have seen her in a photo (laughs). So we are hoping to see her in person so that is the thing. That is great.



Preparation during the wedding day of two members; child wedding attendant (published with permission)



Bridegroom and bride entertaining people after meals; mother and child sharing a moment of joy



Bridegroom and bride during Ring exchange; Cake cutting

Equally, some participants agreed that they are each other's keeper, they are not alone, and there are people they can talk to. One feels at home when sharing stories, sharing problems and suggesting solutions to the problems. Tumo added, "Yeah, I can describe them as a family like a community, yeah ... Because you feel at home sharing like stories, sharing your problems and suggest solutions to the problems. Yeah, they are a community."

Lastly, some participants pointed out the members make sacrifices to ensure that the community grows. For instance, OJ observed,

I think from what I have seen in the past years I think these are people who genuinely want the community to grow yeah. Because it's, no one can force you to come, I mean you can go to 11 a.m. mass. In the past years, we have seen people sometimes they go for 11 a.m. mass and come back for two p.m. [African] Mass. These are people who even have sometimes like the pianist, for instance, he has a job to go to by 3:30 in the afternoon and that is the time mass closes. So, you see people who make a lot of sacrifices just to see that people are encouraged and the community grows. That is kind of spirit, kind of zeal people have carried.

5.3 From Inculturation to Interculturation

As noted earlier, the STM African Catholic community members sometimes use the term inculturation with reference to the STM African Mass. While in Catholic theology, inculturation generally refers to the fusing of Catholicism with African cultures in African homelands¹⁸ (or other indigenous cultures), what happens at the African Mass is a distinctive kind of inculturation that might be described as “interculturation” because the members of the STM community are from *different* countries with *distinctive* cultures which they bring to the African Mass in a *Canadian* context. As noted earlier, this interculturation is enabled by the cooperation of St. Thomas More College, and likely facilitated by the Canadian cultural value of multiculturalism.

Chupungco emphasized that “an inculturated liturgy is one whose shape, language, rites, symbols, and artistic expressions reflect the cultural pattern of the local church.”¹⁹ In response to this, there are elements of African Traditional Religions that have been embraced and inculturated in Catholicism. Such elements are music/song, movements, spirit, and religion as a way of life, prayers, invocations, blessings, sacrifices, and offerings.

5.3.1 Music/song

Lebaka Morakeng observes that, in African spirituality, singing is all about bringing people back to the right rhythms of life. Music and dance provide an opportunity for people to participate emotionally and physically in prayer and worship. Traditionally, when Africans worship, they sing and dance together. The singing and the dance involves all people, children, youth, and adults: “They have a tendency to become emotionally or spiritually involved in the

¹⁸Dennis M. Doyle, in his book, *The Church Emerging from Vatican II: A Popular Approach to Contemporary Catholicism* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1998), 302, quotes the Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes* (1965): “The richness of particular cultures is recognized in that ‘the customs handed down... form the patrimony proper to each human community’ (GS,53).” He adds that, “the positive values of culture, while accepted as good in themselves, are also seen as providing “some preparation for the acceptance of the message of the gospel” (GS, 57). Clement Majawa wrote that inculturation is “the inserting and earthing of the Gospel” or “rooting the faith in local cultures” making it meaningful, relevant, transformative and salvific. He adds that, “it is a process by which the people of a certain culture are able to express, celebrate, formulate, witness and communicate their Christian faith and their experience of the Paschal Mystery in terms that make the most sense and convey life and truth in their social and cultural environment for deeper evangelization and holistic transformation” (“African Christianity in the post-Vatican II Era,” *The Routledge Companion to Christianity in Africa*, ed. Elias Kifon Bongmba [New York: Routledge, 2016], 222).

¹⁹Anscar J. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation Sacramentals, Religiosity, and Catechesis* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 37.

service.”²⁰ It is noteworthy in this context that music is an intrinsic part of everyday life, as well as in religion.²¹ Mbiti adds that “Africans are very fond of music. Music, dance, and singing are found in every community. Music is used in all activities of African life.”²²

5.3.2 Body Movements

Africans cannot sing while they are standing still; they have to include some kind of body movement. Morakeng quotes Kubik’s view on music and movement: “Music in Africa is almost naturally associated with movement and action, such as playing percussion instruments, clapping of hands or dancing.”²³

5.3.3 Religion as a way of life

For Africans, religion is a way of life that cannot be separated from other aspects of life. Mbiti writes, “Religion is found in all areas of human life. It has dominated the thinking of African peoples to such an extent that has shaped their cultures, their social life, their political organizations and economic activities. We can say, therefore, that religion is closely bound up with the traditional way of African life, while at the same time, this way of life has shaped religion as well.”²⁴ Similarly “religion has been for Africans the normal way of looking at the world and experiencing life itself ... it is found wherever people are.”²⁵ Majawa adds, “The Africans have a profound religious sense which should be utilized to transform Christian liturgies in Africa and beyond.”²⁶

5.3.4 Spirit/Holy Spirit

As noted above, interview participants spoke of the experience of the power of the Holy Spirit in worship. This goes hand in hand with what Mbiti observes about the African religious sense of a mystical order in the universe: “It is held in all African societies that there is power in the universe, and that it comes from God. It is mystical power, in the sense that it is hidden and mysterious. This power is available to a spirit and to certain human beings.”²⁷ To African

²⁰Moraken E.K. Lebaka, “The value of traditional African religious music into liturgy: Lobethal Congregation,” *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 7, no. 3 (2015): 1.

²¹Ibid.

²²Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 9.

²³G. Kubik, “Africa,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 2001), 199.

²⁴Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 10.

²⁵Ibid., 14.

²⁶Majawa, *African Christianity in the post-Vatican II era*, 226.

²⁷Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 41-42.

Catholic Christians, this may be interpreted in terms of possession by the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity.

5.3.5 Sacrifices and offerings

Africans are generous in giving back to God sacrifices and offerings, since for them, what they possess is from God. According to Mbiti, “Sacrifices and offerings constitute one of the commonest acts of worship among African people.”²⁸ In some cases, sacrifices and offerings are directed to God/the gods, spirits, and living-dead (ancestors).²⁹ Sacrifices are made to express joy, gratitude or thanksgiving to God/the gods during rites of passage: birth, initiation, marriage and death, during planting, harvesting, time of distress. They are accompanied by prayers. Traditionally, Africans offer sacrifices such as oxen, sheep, and goats, as well as offerings such as food and all kinds of crops.³⁰ In Africa, the Catholic Church has incorporated (“inculturated”) into worship similar offerings, such as grains of all kinds, and fruits like instance bananas, pineapples, mangoes, oranges, etc.—food produced by people by the work of their hands. In the Catholic Church there is no animal sacrifice because Jesus Christ is interpreted as the ultimate sacrifice dedicated to God. In African Catholicism, people mostly offer money and some cases tithe. People are encouraged to offer themselves to God even if they have nothing to offer. So, Africans can offer any kind of animal or bird (like chickens), but there is no shedding of blood as in African Traditional Religions. Once the offering is made, it is duly dedicated to God, but the offerings are used by the priest or in church ministries like assisting the poor or the needy in the parish.

5.3.6 Prayers, invocations, and blessings

In African Traditional Religions, prayers were (and continue to be) a common act of worship. These prayers may be of varying lengths, and to God, to the living-dead or other intermediary spiritual beings. Traditionally, prayers were not written down but preserved orally.³¹ As Magesa explains, “Prayers, sacrifices, and offerings are elements considered central to an ethical life and feature prominently in the practice of African religion.”³² The Catholic Church in Africa has incorporated African ways of praying in church liturgy. The Catholic

²⁸ Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophy*, 58.

²⁹ Ibid.; living-dead means the people who have recently died and are remembered by the living as part of the family.

³⁰ Ibid., 59.

³¹ Ibid., 61

³² Launti Magesa, *African Traditional Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (MaryKnoll, NY:Orbis Books, 1997), 195.

faithful freely expresses their prayers to God or ask the intercession of the saints and angels (which can be equated with the living dead and spirits in African traditional terms). Mbiti defines invocations as a “shortened and common version of prayers ... and show a spontaneous response to God, asking Him to intervene for a particular purpose. For example they may be in form of: ... help me o God!, God pity me!”³³ The African Catholic Church has adapted similar expressions and teaches the faithful to seek God’s assistance any moment or in times of danger, such as “May God bless you!, May God help you!”³⁴ The same invocational words of blessing are used by African Catholics.

The participants described the STM African Mass as helping them to feel at home and reminding them of what is happening back in Africa. There are elements which are incorporated in STM African Catholic liturgy which make the liturgy lively and make it resemble the liturgy back in their African homelands. The following elements are integrated/inculturated at the STM African Mass: African songs, prayers, musical instruments, body movements, preaching, multicultural community, and African attire.

First, all the participants confirmed that singing was one important element integrated into the African Mass. As Mbiti notes, “A lot of African music and songs deal with religious ideas and practices. The religious rituals, ceremonies, and festivals are always accompanied by music, singing and sometimes dancing. Music gives the outlet to the emotional expression of the religious life, and it is a powerful means of communication in African traditional life.”³⁵ For Africans, music is an integral part of the liturgy. Music at the Mass is drawn from different parts of Africa. The African members learn different songs from different countries and sing them during mass (see Appendix 6). Mama affirms, “So music mainly, music. Music is a big thing like I said that is what makes the difference here from back home because music is an integral part of mass like is, is music that is mass because like when you go to church and the music is not good is like today mass wasn’t good. Why? Because music was not good (laughs), if it is lively like everybody participates and yeah, I think music is one that you know what I would say.” Deng Jok adds, “Instrumentation like playing the drums, kayamba and all range of other instruments that we have. The fact that we sing songs from Africa whether you understand them or not but

³³ Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophy*, 65.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 26-27.

we are able to sing, it makes it slightly different, you get to learn how other people worship in other countries yes.”

Additionally, playing musical instruments was mentioned by every participant as an inculturated aspect that has been incorporated in the African Mass. Mbiti points out that “Many musical instruments are used by African people such as the drum, flute, rattle, whistle and others.”³⁶ Some participants mentioned that different musical instruments are used during mass which adds flavour to the church music, making the liturgy more lively and engaging. Some of the commonly mentioned musical instruments include drums, shakers, tambourines, kayamba, piano, and guitar. Drumming is a key aspect of African culture and every beat of the drum has a meaning. In church, the beating of drums with different tunes conveys beauty to the person listening and is like a form of consolation. Drums make church music lively. As Jayne observed,

I think the ability to, you know the use of different kinds of instruments, normal mass here people just use the piano that is the only instrument that you want to say that is accompanying the music. With us the African worship you will find that we have different things, you know the drums, and the drums are very important part of worship, even if we have the piano because pianos are not available in most of the churches. So, the drum is the most accessible one. And so, that is a big part of you know using our voices that are a big part of it, you know whether people are ululating or whatever, using what are they called, tambourines yeah. I don't know the others the kayamba. So, those kinds of things just bring a sense of you know, a sense of what enriches the whole experience you know. And the ability to be able to sing in different languages here, we can sing in different languages. In Kenya, we probably we will sing in the vernacular of the area where you are and Swahili of course and then some places if you live in cities you probably you will have an English mass but that's anyway, for the most part, I will have never gone for an English mass in Kenya I will (laughs) always just go to Swahili, mostly the Swahili mass so yeah. So, to all those things you know the ability to be able to sing in your own language (claps), movement. To us Africans movement is also is a big part of it, you know using your body, your hands, your voice, to praise, you know praise is very different, it comes, you use you, to you bring yourself to God. So you use yourself to praise God in ways that you can. So, to me, that's what the African mass allows me to do yeah.

Also mentioned by the interviewees is that at the STM African Mass, members use different parts of the body during liturgy to praise God. This includes dancing and clapping hands. Sarah affirmed, “Okay. Some of the African elements are the singing, the drumming.

³⁶ Ibid., 27.

Yeah and togetherness, you know the colourful way of dressing yeah.” Additionally, “Africans have a style of doing things during mass. This is shown by the way the collection of offerings is done during mass. The African members dance as they go to offer offerings.” Brother D added,

Okay. Two big ones are, okay involved in singing and all involved dancing or clapping or kind sort of movement in the way that is closer to the worship itself in Africa. Now in my mother parish the singing cuts across all the pews of the church, clapping does the same and so the chorus and the sound of the music you can tell is coming from all the corners or from the whole church like if you could sit outside. And somehow because everyone sings the environment within the worship or within the church is different it feels like by the time the church is done is you come out with a real feeling of being in touch with God. Not that you cannot have worship in silence or quiet you have worshiped and singing we know research says is good for the body you come out having a good feel of the singing. I mean that like the singing that is one aspect. The other thing is that dancing is allowed too. You can stand up and move your feet or during the time of offertory we go out pew by pew and go to give the offertory and at that you can dance as well you find that you have a chance to move your feet added to the singing that it feels. So we thought we can do this Africans are able to sing and dance during the offertory dancing that is offertory time we can go pew by pew and go and offer their offertory and dance we try to be good and achieve and this way I like yeah.

In addition, some participants remarked that that African preaching is soul-touching and encourages people to move on with life even during difficult times. The preaching takes a longer period as compared to regular, Canadian mass. During preaching and prayers of the faithful, the priests also lead in praise and worship songs. Some participants noted the fact that the priests go an extra mile of singing most parts of the mass instead of simply reciting them. This brings an aspect of keenness. Rich observed,

Yes as I said there are certain aspects which are incorporated in STM African Mass; first of all we as Africans during that mass we sing our local ... African songs and we also dance which is very, very nice very good, because to be very kindly with you have gone to all those Catholic churches in Saskatoon like the one where we are right now I don't see people dance I don't know why, people don't dance in church, the mass is just so quiet, is just so cold, so uninteresting in a way and stuff like that. Also at the STM African Mass, the preaching is kind of soul-touching you know, it touches your soul and it lasts for about twenty to thirty minutes which is quite lively, quite good compared to you know to what we are already used to hear where is five, ten and ... stuff like that and people have ended like that doesn't bring out that strong spirit in you. So those are some of the aspects that really made me be part of the African community and then after mass, after our STM African Mass we all gather as brothers and sisters we greet each other and stuff like that which is really hardly the case with other brothers and sisters, who like this person is rushing to go out, some of them even going out to work on

Sunday so that they could be paid, whether extra time or whatsoever; to me it's great disrespect of religion and stuff like that. So, you know that culture we brought back home where we know that Sunday is a day of worship, a day of thanksgiving, a day of praise. You know we, as Africans we have always lived in that culture and that is what really motivates me to be this part of STM African Mass.

OJ added, "The singing during mass, during the sermons often you see the priests sing, the people will carry on, and the offertory too, the presentation of gifts, the procession, those are the common things in Africa so it is not something we do, I don't think we do this in a regular mass here. So, it is something we do, you see and you feel like you are home."



Faithful during homily

Nevertheless, in the African Catholic Mass, the participants emphasized that there was an aspect of a multicultural community. This multicultural sense of African unity is distinctive in the African Mass because is not something which is experienced in Africa, where worship is culture-specific to a particular country or locale. People from different parts of the world are welcomed to worship thus bringing members together. As Ade Olu pointed out, "I have just mentioned one community, the aspect of African culture. We have songs that are reflective of different tribes, dialects in Africa. Our musical instruments are completely African. Our style of worship is extremely African. Our African life continues to grow even though we are not in Africa."

Further, some participants observed that there is colourful dressing in African attire when members attend mass. This brings the out the beauty of who Africans are, as they dress in clothing from different parts of Africa. Most women from Africa have common modes of dress

using a material known as Kitenge,³⁷ although the colour varies from one part of Africa to another. For men there are different outfits depending on country; these are unique and attractive too. In some countries, the husband and wife match in their dressing and this helps to identify who they are even without asking. Themba observed,

I think it was mostly the music. Maybe the dress I don't know, the dress code, the people came with African attire it was a huge break from you knows the usual life you see outside ... Fr. Iheanyi preaching ... Oh yeah, his summons were, they really touched me as a person, I felt he was speaking to me directly, because like being far away from home and if you are alone, it is challenging when you hear messages like it keeps you moving.



Mr. and Mrs. Atake; Mr. and Mrs Donkuru; Mr. and Mrs. Dzathor (wedding engagement)

Equally important, some participants identified a key aspect that is integrated during worship as the African way of praying. The prayers of the faithful are done in a spontaneous way, not in written form but as the people are guided by the Holy Spirit, one after another. After each individual concludes his/her prayer, the other members responded by singing a short chorus to ask God to answer their prayers. Sometimes the priest starts the prayers of the faithful through praise and worship songs. For instance, Useni commented, "Some of the elements, is actually, I remember one time is time that STM Mass here it was included like general and it was held by,

³⁷ Kitenge means sarong. The kitenge or chitenge is an African garment similar to the sarong, often worn by women wrapped around the chest or waist, over the head as a headscarf, or as a baby sling. Kitenges are similar to kangas and kikoy, but are of a thicker cloth and have an edging only on a long side. Quoted from Kitenge - Definition and synonyms of kitenge in the English dictionary ... Englishdictionary.education/en/kitenge

the choir program was under the African students' mass, so the singing and all those things were done like how Africans do when having their prayers, how they sing and all these kind of stuff. So, I feel that also they have integrated some African worshipping values in STM here which is something good."

From the interview findings, most participants agreed that the African elements integrated into the Mass are appealing to them. For these elements help them to feel better, feel at home, and feel welcomed. Imeah commented, "Very appealing, like very appealing, like because I remember the first time, because you know back home we use drums, mass is lively everybody is dancing, everywhere, so, the first time I attended mass [in Saskatoon] it was calm, quiet, it like oh my God, yeah, what is going on here? When I come for African Mass I feel as if I am back home. It makes a lot of difference because I feel that, that feeling I am home, yeah." Deng Jok added, "Very, very much, they are very much appealing to me. I have just feeling that, well once I am able to worship the way I have been able to worship in all my life yes. And it makes me want to come to church, even more, yes."

Moreover, some participants claim that these elements connect them to their faith, help them to keep it, and to relate to their cultures (inculturation/interculturation). Jayne said,

I think that would be important because there is certain, I mean ah, I wasn't Roman Catholic but if I may say just in general in being able to have an opportunity to worship in ways that connect to you, because I mean, what do I say ah, as much is faith is the word of a God and everything else but faith is also connected to culture in many ways. Cultures are also in some ways are infused with faith and the only reason why maybe faith or a Christian journey continues to grow in places like Africa is because of the infusion of the culture in it. In our life, the culture to thrive in it and in other places where it continues to thrive is because of how people can express themselves in ways that they understand yeah. Or they have a connection to it because I think faith is a connection, faith is much more than hearing the word, it is also because we wanna say people is a way of life and if it is a way of life is infused into our culture and what you do. You know, so to me I think it is appealing to somebody to be able to have that opportunity to be connected with so many, the whole of you connected because I mean that culture is who you are in many ways and so therefore if faith is way of life so then faith becomes infused into that yeah.

Some participants note that musical instruments add flavour to the mass to help in forgetting sorrows and attaining peace. Gozmok declared,

Yeah, it is very important that is why the thing that adds flavour to the mass and in the African Mass I play one of the musical instruments yeah. That is also you know music is life, I love music and when I play music it helps me forget my sorrows

(laughs). So, music is a very good way of praising God, so he says he who does sing prays twice that is what St. Augustine says. So, it is very appealing to me and very important to me too.

For some, these elements are a sign of joy, bring back memories, and offer healing. For instance, Maria noted, “Yes because when we are clapping and we are singing, Africans are joyful people, we are joyful at celebration, so when we come together like that, we dance, we sing, we laugh, it is healing, it’s healing, so it brings forth memories from home. Yes.”

Some participants say that the African Mass helps them to have the spirit of God and reminds them how worship is done back in Africa. For instance, Rich said,

Yeah, they are so appealing to me because of it really, all these things they are really helping me. When I first all came here in Saskatoon about one and half years ago, for the first, would I say five and six months I did go to church because I was looking for a place of worship and didn’t find and when I didn’t go to my first church at somewhere around downtown? It was my Catholic church I really didn’t feel the spirit of God in me. Because everything was just brief, everything was just rushed, and stuff like that. So when I was told of STM African Mass or whatsoever I gave it try and it really did a kindled that culture of how the African Mass worship goes. And really, I did like that so even coming here on Sundays it is just that well it is Roman Catholic I just keep on that faith, keep on that tradition, keep on that religion and stuffs like that. Otherwise we have the STM African Mass every Sunday which I would advise you, you know as one of the members of inner cycles of the religious group to bring up that proposal that our African brothers and sisters want this STM African Mass to be every Sunday I think that would be very nice so that some of us would cut off from this other western system of worship and to adhere our African culture of worship.

Equally, for some it is appealing, for it helps them to bring out their core values expressed in the African way of worship. For instance, Tumo noted, “Yes, sure because I am used like exciting worship so when I came here I was attending services of western. So, the songs were kind of but it is not good to say God’s songs are boring but it was boring for me so and sometimes like I was in choir in Africa. But here I feel, I don’t sing, God please forgive me because I don’t think is fun, you can’t feel like singing, so the African Mass I participate as I used to participate back in Africa yeah.”

5.4 Impact of the African Mass

The interview results clearly indicate that culturally appropriate religious services can have a positive impact on the adaptation of African newcomers. The participants felt, however, that the Canadian Catholic Church, in general, did not make an effort to help African newcomers to develop a sense of belonging in the church, thus slowing the process of adaptation. There are no set guidelines in Canadian churches to welcome African (or other) newcomers from various countries. There is a need for a forum in the Catholic Church to make newcomers welcomed, to foster a sense of belonging so that African Catholic newcomers will not withdraw from the church and to join other denominations where they feel more welcomed, appreciated and valued. For instance, Deng Jok stated,

This relates pretty back to what we talked about previously and I would say, compared to back at home again when you go to church you expect that everybody who comes to the church would be very accommodating, that they would be welcoming, but sometimes you just don't find such here, you attend church, you could say hi to somebody or you meet people in church, you can talk in church but once you meet outside the church settings and you say hello to them because you remember them they will not want to engage with you in any way. So, I would say that is a challenge. Because you have that free and open conversation in the church but not outside church settings so then it becomes very difficult. How do you get to relate to this person? You wait for the person in church on Sunday to talk to them and never talk to them when you meet outside church settings! That is a great challenge. ... Absolutely and thank you for having this interview (laughs). I never thought about it but talking to you now I think it is one area that is not explored in terms of raising our voices. As members of African Catholic church, we should certainly write to the diocese and alert them on how other people feel about Catholic Church in Canada. Certainly, a number of African Catholic members have moved to worship in other denominations. Since I came here, that is, before we started the African Mass we have lost a good number of Catholic members who originally attended mass here at STM, but since then they have moved on to the other [non-Catholic] churches where they feel welcomed ... Yeah. This is because we do pray as individuals at home, so when you come to church you come to gathering with others to worship together but the feeling that when you come to church is not different from holding your own individual prayers.

The findings also show that African Catholic newcomers have little awareness of Catholic social services such as Catholic Family Services of Saskatoon, Catholic Women's League, Knights of Columbus, refugee ministry[migration office], among others offered in the Diocese of Saskatoon that can help them to settle more easily.³⁸ This calls for the Catholic

³⁸ Refugee ministry is organization in Saskatoon diocese that deals with refugees in Saskatoon.

Church in Canada to assertively make the presence of such services known by newcomers. Most of the participants admitted that they struggled to settle by themselves or with the help of their friends or family members but that the Catholic Church did little except in the case of particular individuals who personally volunteered to help some members, but not under the auspices of the church. For instance, Tumo recalled, “No [he didn’t receive any assistance from the church], but by the counselor who went to pick me [up] at the airport happened to be a Roman Catholic, so she helped me to connect me to the church the following day. And I was closer to the priests, and I think they helped me to settle down too.” In a similar context, Gozmok replied, “Ah, not really. Not really.”

The results indicate that the STM African Catholic Community does assist in newcomer adaptation in relation to worship but not in the settlement process. For instance, Chimwemwe said,

I think I settled in Saskatoon before finding [the] STM African Mass ... I think, at STM, you find people that you identify with who are blacks, who are from Africa. And even though they do not speak your language, you feel belonged to in a way. And we have this similar this goal to keep the African church just as it was in Africa because here we worship in African way so that is the common goal that people who come to the STM African Mass have ... The African way of worship is to dance, to drum, and to shout. To clap and to sing in an African way.

The interview results indicate that the Catholic Church in Canada as evidenced by the members of the STM African Catholic community has not been in the front line in assisting African Catholic newcomers to settle locally, unlike several non-Catholic denominations that assist them by welcoming them at the airport, and providing them with accommodation and job opportunities (especially the Redeemed Christian Church of God). The African Catholic newcomers shared that when they go to Pentecostal churches they receive a warmer welcome and there is more interaction than in Catholic parishes.

The interviews also show, however, that religion is very important to African Catholic newcomers to Saskatoon. This is evident by their church attendance: the majority of the participants are involved in church activities every Sunday and a few during the week. They affirm that despite the lack of formal settlement services, their lives have improved because of STM African Mass participation. Many participants acknowledged that their social lives had improved due to attendance at the African Mass. This is because they can meet different people from different parts of Africa other their own countries of origin and make friends. Also, some

feel that they are welcomed more in the African Catholic community than at the regular mass. Some say they feel at home, experience joy, and have been comforted by the African Mass. For instance, Rich said,

Yeah, certain aspects of my life have been ... greatly affected due to my attendance of or due to my active participation in the STM African Mass. First, I do socialise very well with my African brothers and sisters which is very good. equally have been you know uplifted spiritually yeah because, there is a saying that home is home, home remains your roots and everything that you do whether you fly and go to Russia, you go to Australia, you go to furthest continents in the world. There are certain things you that you miss in those countries you know which are, which you never get even if you go there and you are proud you say you are in this part of the world you must be missing certain aspects. So, I think that STM African Mass has inculcated in me some of those African virtues in church worship, some of those African values you know concerning church worship which I, which has really shaped my life, my personality as a whole. So, I do appreciate that so much.

In addition, some participants acknowledged that their spiritual lives had improved by connecting them to their faith, singing in the choir and playing musical instruments. For some, their prayer life has improved. For instance, Maria noted, “Yes, I think, you see, the African way of praying is peculiar, these are some of the things that we have introduced into African Mass at STM. So, my prayer life has improved, and then I am relaxed and happy to worship, you know in that way because it is different from the white man’s way of worshipping. So, I like the difference.” Adeline added, “Like before going there I was not feeling like welcomed in the churches especially here. In the churches, we are just going there and sometimes you feel sleepy, you are not like you are in church. So, when I went to the African Mass I could wake up, I know I am going to church and I can feel the spirit, which is different from the masses here in Saskatoon.”

Similarly, some claim that their commitment and dedication to church participation and taking part in church worship has improved. Gozmok said,

Yeah, yeah that’s commitment yeah, it’s coming to African Mass has actually help me you know to improve my commitment in something because I have always being committed but I have not always been, I have not been always facing to it trying to fit in so many things under at the time I and still go to church because just the way I told you back home you don’t so many things doing so you have time to go to church ... Yeah but here when I was still in school you have to still to do your school work (claps), you have to go to your work. Then when you combine all those things then sometimes you feel like oh no let me forget church

today (claps) but yeah, you know but when you look it again you say oh you are going to African mass and now you are going to worship God in the African way and you are going to enjoy it yeah. And also encouragement also from fellow members the African members the African community they encourage you all the time telling you, “Yes you can do it” and all that. So, with that, it builds that commitment that you are resilience knowing that you can always do it.

Also, some feel that the African Mass gives them an opportunity to learn different African languages and enjoy sing singing from different parts of African, an experience distinctive to the STM African Community that becomes something important in their lives. Ade Olu said,

The aspect of my life that has improved is meeting other Africans, learning songs especially in different dialect and I don’t mean by any means to say that those songs were easy because they were not, and having to coordinate as a choirmaster or coordinator of a choir. Coordinating songs that I did even know what they mean and trying to make people learn what I am also trying to learn. So it is a good and a challenge. And such challenge is necessary for growth. The other day, I was with a workplace colleague who is Ghanaian and she was singing a Ghanaian song, “*Asedanyinaa ye wodze Jesu, meBotetentim Nyame ...*” I told her I know the song.

Some participants expressed their appreciation of the different cultures of people from different parts of Africa such as modes of dress and food that they would not necessarily be exposed to in their own countries of origin, but do experience due to the interculturalization of the STM African Mass. Brother D recalled,

One is the (pause) the different other languages I should come to know about, I cannot speak them but I can know about them okay. Honestly, with me, that is very good (laughs) I just come to know about this language about South Sudan and, I have come to know in Nigeria the Hausas some of them are actually Christians it was hard ever to imagine that yeah for them to be Christians (claps). And so, the other thing is in terms of this like one we come with our African costumes and I like it (laughs) and then even the food too, the food that you talked about the first time I ate it like strike something in mind about my own culture. Corn is there, a few times people boil it and few times, but boil it as vegetables I just never imagine that there are others cultures does something like that. So, the children of God from different places coming together and still have many things in common that we see also helps and enhance deepen the notion of the existence of God itself. Which even doesn’t arise if you are in Africa which even a secular society whether (laughs) in hands of God arise as lived. So, this way helps us to understand that deeper quite differences you can find throughout the world the common one can still have a great power to God yeah.

Importantly, some participants felt that the STM African Mass has enhanced their sense of belonging and having a community. For instance, Deng Jok, claimed,

I would say yes, my social cycle has expanded. Had it not been for the mass there are quite a few people that I could have just met in school and even never ever talked to, but with the Mass, I have met several people with whom and I have been able to talk to and help each other to fit in, encouraging each other in what everybody is doing. So yes, my social cycle has expanded and that definitely gives me a sense of being and belonging and attachment to a community. Yes, I know I belong to a community if I have any issues that are bothering me I know, I can approach anybody anywhere and they are more than willing to help me out ... I would say yes, besides attending regular mass, the African Mass has helped me to boost my spiritual health. Because it brings back that sense of feeling, the kind of worship that I am used to. So, it has, I would say, it has helped me to grow spiritually.

More importantly, some participants said that the attendance of STM African Mass has helped them to attain some peace, especially during the difficult times of their academic lives. For example, Tumo noted, “Yeah, just you know like meeting together with different Africans because back home I used to meet mostly like South Sudanese, when I came to Kenya, it was Kenyans and Sudanese. But here, it is like whole Africa in one place so it is different. I get to know more about Africans because of culture, their songs, and people from West Africa, South Africa, East Africa. So, I learn a lot from being together with them. And, also the preaching of the priests especially the homily, his words of wisdom and encouragement like the time I have academic pressure.”

Additionally, for some participants, attending the African Mass refreshes their memory of what takes place in their home countries. A feature of the religious culture shock expressed by some interviewees is that some churches are closed during the summer for people to go on vacation. In Africa, in Catholic churches when there are not enough priests to celebrate mass every Sunday, the church members usually hold Sunday liturgies without a priest and all the members attend mass as usual. Sarah observed,

Woo, it's, there are aspects of my life that's in my life are helpful, so I know, yeah I know here and Ghana is compulsory for you to go to church on Sunday but here it is not like that because people want to take vacations especially during summer, they don't feel like going to church because they want to go for vacation for that matter, some churches like they shut down some churches for the summer, yeah but being in this African Catholic Mass really helps because it sends your mind back that you are probably in Africa, and you should do what you were doing back in Africa going to church, so yeah, even if it like every first

week of a month, it helps you to know that this is an African Mass, you have to go unless something comes on your way. Yeah ... In Africa, I have never heard they are closing the church because there are few people coming to church (laughter).

In Saskatoon, the African Mass is celebrated during the summer months when there is no mass held by the weekly STM worshipping community, which helps to satisfy the Africans' preferences and expectations. As one participant remarked, despite the lack of formal settlement services, the aspects of his life that have improved due to the STM African Mass are too numerous to mention.

From the findings, it is clear that the availability of culturally appropriate worship opportunities facilitates African newcomers' adaptation in Saskatoon; in other words, it addresses the (hitherto unidentified) phenomenon of religious culture shock. This is because the STM African Catholic Mass offers the members the kind of worship practiced back in Africa. This helps in maintaining, retaining and sustaining African Catholic identity in Saskatoon. The mass is unique and distinctive from the regular Canadian mass in many ways: singing/African choir, African priests/preaching /sermons, dancing, body movement, African culture and diversity, musical instruments/drums, African values and virtues, socialization, sense of community, visiting and praying, family, presence of the Holy Spirit, social events, friendship and relationship, mutual support, caring and sense of belonging, being each other's keeper, and self-sacrifice. The way of worship is distinctively, thoroughly and diversely African.

The findings show that most participants (85%) felt that the singing of African choir at STM is a very distinctive feature that characterizes Africans as unique people in Saskatoon. The ability of the members to sing songs from different countries with different languages is especially distinctive. As Sarah puts it, "The uniqueness aspect is that you know the way it has something enjoyable, you know the music, the singing it has been enjoyable, not just be like dull, so all the drumming that goes on, and most especially when we are going for collections, yeah, you have to dance go and put your collections dance back. The members of the choir are from different countries. I know like churches here in fact if they were doing that they will be more active. I mean enjoy the church get up and shake yourself, go and put your collection. So that is the unique part of the mass."

Equally, some participants felt that having African priests celebrating mass is something unique and should not be taken for granted. These African priests can understand fellow Africans

better and they frame the sermon/preaching in ways which Africans can appreciate. During Sunday liturgy, the African Mass is attended by two to five priests. Jayne said,

I think for the most part is that, I mean we come from different regions a lot of us, and that is unique. And then we would be able and in some ways is still a work in progress but I think that we may be able to come together is going to be maybe, we just haven't realized I would say maybe haven't absorbed the power of what's happening so if we are able to get to that point that we have all these people from all these different places in Africa singing being able to have the ability to sing from these different groups from different communities around Africa I think that is very, I mean I think that is very unique in so many ways. The other thing that is unique is that, a lot of people there I mean are students too, I mean we have few of us who, but we started out as students yeah and then you know, so is unique that you know is still students. I think the other thing is we have an opportunity to have African priests who can lead the mass who understand that aspect of it chances are that we would have wanted to have it African Mass but probably we would not have an African priest. So, the idea that we have an abundance of them that's unique (laughs).

Spirit/Holy Spirit is a repeated theme throughout the interviews. The participants emphasized the power of the Holy Spirit in their worship. In Africa, there is an emphasis on Catholic Charismatic Renewal whereby the members believe that they are possessed by Holy Spirit just the way Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the disciples. Some participants point out they are not able to feel the Holy Spirit in the Catholic churches in Saskatoon. This is likely one of the reasons African newcomers tend to be attracted by spirit-oriented churches, e.g., Pentecostal churches, in which some interviewees acknowledge that the presence of the Spirit is high.

The term Holy Spirit/spirit has mentioned by the participants 30 times. For example, Rich observed,

But home we have weekday masses, I often attended those, then the regular or the traditional masses on Sundays, I equally attend those as well. And I really loved it so much because you really feel the culture of mass in you. You don't just go to church because you want to fulfill that obligations or something of that sort. Being in church you feel the Holy Spirit moving down the blood and stuff like that so that really motivates you to be really part of the mass and stuff like that. So, it was not just an everyday Sunday tradition; it was a more a daily routine that at least one has to pray every day, I mean one has to invite the Holy Spirit every day and stuff like. So, I really enjoy, you know, my Christian life back home than what I even enjoying here in Canada.

Mama added,

Seriously you go, you'll be surprised, the music is lively, people are in high spirits

is not like here people come and stand as if you are, you know I don't see people singing in the church and is like why are you here, I am like, you have hymnals in your pews and you don't want to sing, why are you in church? I just ask myself that question you just carry yourself carry yourself to church to do what? I am not trying to be judgmental but ... Yeah, like so all those things, the music might not be so good but just imagine if everybody participated in singing and even the way they sing the song even if the song is not nice that alone you feel uplifted you know like those are some of the things, you know is just about time people become more active in the church. I think there is a lot of apathy in the [Canadian] Catholic Church and a lot needs to change.

Additionally, more than half of the participants observe that during the liturgy there is dancing as the choir sings and dancing during offertory as members offer their gifts of offerings. As Useni put it,

Well, I think the uniqueness is about the choir, how they sing and they dance, so that is a unique thing ... Is just the different uniqueness is how the choir sings because, it is singing in different languages all over, it's like all African countries. So, different languages from different countries, people try to learn so I am Sudan[ese] but I am learning, I have already learnt a lot of Nigerian songs, some of Kenyans, I am also learning Ghanaian songs which is very good, so this is the only different thing.

As a matter of fact, some participants noted that the African way of worship is distinct in all its forms. Deng Jok observed,

The way of worshipping is unique and we dedicate Sunday to a day of worship, we do not attach time to it. As in we do not say that a mass is one hour and it should be one hour or less like in the regular mass, so that is a unique aspect. Sunday is dedicated for prayers and giving back to God after working throughout the week, so that is a unique aspect that you will not find it in regular mass anyway... The introduction of African sounds and the celebration of the mass by an African priest is very different and the fact that there would be more than one occasion we have more than two priests at a time to celebrate the mass that is very unique as well. And after the mass the fact that the priests have time we sit together, we celebrate together, we have snack or lunch together these are very unique that we don't have in regular mass.

Ade Olu added, "The African way of worship is distinct in all forms. The music, the musical instruments, the representation of African culture and diversity is very unique."

Similarly, the STM African community offers a unique African culture of diversity in the sense that the members come from different countries with distinctive ethnic backgrounds and cultures, a kind of worship experience they would rarely encounter in Africa. They bring all this

to worship. Additionally, some attendees are from different “races” (skin colours). This brings beauty and enriches the worship and social aspects of the community. It is a multicultural community. Adeline noted, “What is unique is that we are many people who come from different countries and we are able to make for the mass and everyone feels like we like it and it’s good for us yeah. That I find it unique for us because we come from different cultures, we have different songs, but it seems the same to us that why we keep going there right.”

Further, some participants pointed out the uniqueness of African musical instruments used in worship. There are wide varieties of drums, shakers, keyboard, and guitar. All this accompanies the music in worship thus bringing a sense of Africanness to Saskatoon. Gozmok said,

Yes as I have said is that African way, African flavour. You know in STM Mass[regular mass] we to say sometimes it looks so boring to me but with the African Mass you know we play, play, we play the drums, keyboard and then we sing and dance. This is because you cannot see people singing and dancing in STM [weekly] mass but here you can see people singing and dancing. And then there is this, we sing from different songs, we sing songs from different parts of Africa and we sang Swahili songs, we sing Nigerians’ songs, we sing Ghanaians’ songs so yeah so it’s makes you know appreciate other people’s culture too but in STM we just sing only English (claps) yeah so (laughs).



STM African Mass members playing musical instruments

Also, the participants felt that there are African values and virtues that are practiced at STM African Mass such as aspects of family, joy, solidarity, happiness, friendliness, cordiality, and this strengthens the African community. As well, they share common problems and sorrows.

Tumo said, “Yeah like what I said before, what is unique is the Africans’ joy and the solidarity like we are always like the same family after mass we get together and we talk yeah, but with the other non-African Catholic churches when you finish mass that is the end you, [on] your own by yourself. So for the African Mass is very different yeah.”

Again, another unique aspect of STM African Mass is the ability of members to make and retain friends from different parts of Africa and other parts of the world who attend the mass. This helps in expanding the social life of the members (socialization). Themba said, “The songs, you know the drums and just the people from different parts of Africa. And the sense of community/communion is very high in STM because members know each other, help each other when time is hard.”

In the light of the challenges African Catholic newcomers face as they adapt to worship in Canada and their transition in Canadian society, the findings clearly highlighted some of the challenges that act as barriers to their transition. Some of the barriers that have not been discussed widely by previous research include weather issues (cold), culture shock, work schedule and prayer, balancing church time, and academic life, lay people serving as Eucharist ministers. As Useni put it,

Most of my challenges that I actually face is scheduling work, scheduling sometimes it does not correspond with my church time, so I think that’s the most challenge I that I always face, yeah. So sometimes even the African student mass I find it complicated but sometimes I have to talk to my manager, so sometimes they try to squeeze to make sure that day I don’t work and stuff like that.

In addition, some participants of the STM African Mass admit that the availability of African Mass has helped them to deal with some personal challenges, although they feel that the major challenges are still left for them to deal with personally (employment, housing/accommodation, and underemployment). For instance, Maria related,

Like I said before, the availability of the African Mass has helped me because like I said before that we are like a family, like a community who share problems, joys, and sorrows, we worship together as a family, so then we are able to laugh, laugh off our sorrows, so there is important. ...There are sorrows, there are sorrows in another man’s land, Yes, like the time, that one member lost, their baby, that is a thing for sorrow for the whole community, we are all very supportive. We went to visit, as, when the baby was born, I ran to their house to greet them, so, and I was present there for some time. And when the baby died we were all there and throughout the period we were visiting, being present to the family and all that, so that is an example.

Gozmok added,

I would say yes in a way because, yes in a way because the time for the African Mass is different from the STM [weekly] Mass. So let's say that is once in one month if I am scheduled to work might not actually fall the time for going in the morning then I would still have time to go to the African Mass so it is a relief for me (claps) yeah. And then in other ways just like the first one, I said like how the system works here but coming to African Mass you now see that the African way of worshipping again of great help so yeah.

The interview participants suggested a number of measures the Catholic Church could take to address the challenges encountered by African newcomers, in Saskatoon and elsewhere. The need for the Canadian Catholic Church to be available, welcoming, accommodating, diverse and inclusive, and to willingly to accept African newcomers was emphasized—even to the point that the Canadian Catholic Church should become more African. For instance Chimwemwe stated,

I would say that the Catholic Church should offer Africans the chance to explore their [African] culture and present it to the whole Catholic community. I personally didn't think a separate African-only Mass was necessary but if we wanted to grow. We should have African Mass as a part of a whole Catholic community so that once in a month may be African choir sings, leads the service, we have the ushering, the giving of the communion, the singing every part of mass, and the priest is an African. I think that is a more inclusive way doing it rather than having a separate mass, which is only for Africans. There should be unity and diversity. We should fit in nicely and everybody participates, get white people to participate in our choir, to drum with us to dance with us and all that. I think that is what would have been objective given a chance to influence the African Mass in the community.

This chapter has discussed the key issues pertaining to the research topic identified in the earlier chapters and also pointed to key areas of core significance to the participants in the study. It has shown how the conceptual framework of the study emerged out of the contents of the interviews. The study has shown the different stages of culture shock the African newcomers undergo when they come to Saskatoon. The most striking one that challenges African Catholic newcomers is religious culture shock, an aspect of culture shock that has not previously been acknowledged by scholars. This can be a major issue for African newcomers as the interview data demonstrated. This chapter has also emphasized the theme of African religiosity and elaborated on how African newcomers are able to express their religiosity due to the availability

of the STM African Mass. It highlighted the key elements integrated into the STM African Mass such as African music, dancing, drumming, and multicultural community.. Finally, the chapter has examined in depth the shift of Roman Catholic theology of inculturation to intercultural as practised at the STM African Mass. This intercultural offers a unique beauty, liveliness, and richness of African Catholic culture, brought by the members from their different countries from specific cultural backgrounds, and practiced within the context of an African-Canadian Catholic community.

Chapter Six

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of the Catholic Church in African immigrants' adaptation to Saskatoon. The St. Thomas More African Catholic Community Mass was used as a case study. To achieve this purpose, I used ethnographic techniques including interviews and participant observation. I employed the snowball method as a sampling procedure to recruit the participants of the study from members of STM African Catholic Community Mass. The study involved 20 participants who came to Canada from eight different countries of sub-Saharan Africa. The data were transcribed and presented without alteration of participants' words. The transcribed data were analyzed and presented through themes of the major findings of the interviews.

Frequently stated themes that arose from the interviewees became the conceptual frameworks of the study. These included culture shock theory, the frequent assertion that African religiosity is particularly fervent (“notorious” or “incurable”), and the Roman Catholic theology of inculturation. A major contribution of this thesis was the identification of an aspect of culture shock previously unidentified by scholars: the phenomenon of *religious culture shock*, the kind of shock that the members of the STM African Catholic experienced when they arrived in Saskatoon in Catholic churches where the liturgy and community operate very differently than in Africa, e.g., lay people serving as Eucharistic ministers, girls functioning as altar servers, churches shutting down in the summer, “boring” and unfamiliar music. In addition, this study of the STM African Mass has suggested a variation on the Catholic theology of inculturation that amounts to *interculturalization* (i.e., African newcomers bringing to and incorporating into Canadian worship aspects of African Catholicism from their own distinct cultures) as a distinct approach to worship.

With reference to the study of religion in academia, Nikki Bado writes,

That human religious experiences frequently have psychological, sociopolitical, and economic dimensions is not at issue. These dimensions are worthy of nearly endless exploration, and are the driving force behind much of the academic study of religion. What is frequently missed, however, is an appreciation of the quality that remains when a religious experience has been reduced as far as possible by such a study, a quality that a practitioner would identify as the essence of religion. Thus the issue

becomes what is missed by a reduction of religious experiences to everything *but* something called “religion.”³⁹

This study has significance in the body of literature on newcomer adaptation since it has focused on the role of *religion*, in particular, Catholicism, in the adaptation of African newcomers to Canada, a topic that has attracted very little academic attention.

6.1 Conclusions

The findings from this study led the researcher to draw a number of conclusions pertaining to the research sections examined. The study had four major findings with regard to the original research questions. The first was to determine the role of the Roman Catholic Church in the transition of African newcomers into Canadian society. The study indicated that the participants were not well-informed about the Catholic organizations in the Diocese of Saskatoon that could have helped them to settle when they arrived. Also, they were not also familiar with the formal Saskatoon agencies that help newcomers to settle or adjust to the new environment. A few participants mentioned that they had received some assistance from particular Catholic parishes or non-Catholic agencies. Some acknowledged that they had settled with the help of friends, family members (relatives) or by themselves.

The few interviewees who received services found it difficult to compare the services they had received from Catholic or non-Catholic agencies. First, it was difficult for them to separate formal organizations such as the Saskatoon Open Door Society, Saskatchewan Intercultural Association, and Saskatoon Newcomer Information Centre, from informal services, such as assistance from individuals and various churches, Catholic or non-Catholic. Second, they did not know that there were Catholic settlement organizations to help them to learn about Canadian culture, the Canadian laws, counselling services, family services among other services. Third, some participants came to know about service organizations only after they had settled into the community. Lastly, some received services either from either Catholic or non-Catholic organizations but not both, and some did not receive any services from either. So, it can be concluded that the Diocese of Saskatoon (and likely others across the country) needs to put more effort into identifying African (and other) newcomers to assist them in the settlement process. It is also important to note that, though most participants did not receive settlement services from

³⁹Nikki Bado, *Coming to the Edge of the Circle: A Wiccan Initiation Ritual* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 7–8

the Catholic Church, the participants acknowledged and have appreciated the contribution of the Diocese of Saskatoon towards the STM African Catholic Mass. First, having granted the founders permission to start the African Catholic Community was crucial for them. Second, the provision of space at the STM More College Chapel for the mass was important, as was permitting African priests to celebrate mass for the African newcomers.

The second finding pertains to the original research question of the importance of religion among African newcomers to Canada and to what extent the availability of culturally appropriate worship opportunities facilitates their adaptation to Canadian society. As noted earlier, African scholars, including African Christian scholars, have insisted that Africans are intensely religious as evidenced by the construct of African Traditional Religion.

As evidenced by the findings of this study, religion is in fact very important to African Catholic newcomers to Saskatoon. The majority of the participants are involved in church activities every Sunday and a few during the week. From the participants' perspective, Catholic faith and doctrine are important to them, and they are entrenched in their faith tradition; this provides some support for the assertion that Africans are notoriously (or at least notably) religious and do not separate religion and life. This was evident in the participants' descriptions of their participation in church activities back in their home countries, as well as in their participation at the STM African Mass. Participants spoke of their commitment to participating in the African choir, playing musical instruments, meeting the needs of their fellow Christians in difficulties, and especially being present to one another in times of personal misfortunes. The interviewees agreed that their lives have improved because of STM African Mass participation. Many participants acknowledged that their social lives also had improved due to their attendance at the African Mass.

The study has revealed that the Africans newcomers' perceptions of religion have not shifted after settling to Canada because they still participate in church liturgy and activities in Saskatoon. And the availability of STM African Catholic Mass has enhanced that. From the findings, it is clear that the availability of culturally appropriate worship opportunities facilitates African newcomers' adaptation in Saskatoon. The findings also elaborated on how African newcomers are able to express their distinctive religiosity due to the availability of the STM African Mass. This is because the STM African Catholic Mass offers the members the kind of worship practiced back in Africa. However, the members' attitudes toward some aspects of their

faith lives have changed. As noted earlier, the name of the community has recently been changed to the African-*Canadian* Catholic Community, Saskatoon, reflecting the multicultural nature of the group. Also, the members have a broader perspective towards other Christian denominations. They feel comfortable visiting other Christian churches that offer needed or desired activities and services not offered by their Catholic churches, e.g., participating bible studies held by other churches.

The study has also shown that the kind of inculturation practiced at the STM African Mass can better be described as intercultural. This means that the members are able to express inculturation in the Canadian context through the practice of intercultural whereby members from different parts of sub-Saharan Africa blend their unique religious and cultural heritages into a new synthesis. The members come from different countries where they practice their cultural heritage in the context of different ethnic cultures. The African newcomers bring this already inculturated practice from their particular Catholic churches in Africa to the STM African Mass, which combines the beauty of each country in a multicultural or intercultural way that is distinctive from the inculturation of Catholicism back in Africa. The most inculturated elements of the African Mass include African music, African musical instruments, dancing and clapping of hands, preaching/sermons, ululations, African attire, and African food. The members appreciate this intercultural aspect of the STM African Mass because it embraces African cultural diversity. Although the STM African Catholic Community does not provide the kinds of settlement services that Redeemed Christian Church of God offers, members of the STM community admit that they have benefitted spiritually and emotionally from the community created by the STM African Catholics. Members are proud of the STM African Community where they are able to access the supports they need in celebrating every aspect of life: birth, baptism, graduations, anniversaries, weddings, and special holidays such as Christmas (a African Christmas carol service for the general public). They have sung in other Catholic parishes, and have mourned together. Thus, the African Mass provides spiritual services that address many aspects of newcomers' lives.

The third finding relates to the research question on the challenges African Catholic newcomers face as they adapt to worship in Canada and learn to live in Canadian society. The participants identified some of the major challenges that slow the adaptation process. The key challenge both to adapting to church and to Canadian society is culture shock, the main

theoretical framework of this study. The members expressed it in different ways: the culture was different, people were different, the food was different, environment and climate were different, the bus system was hard to navigate, and simply everything was quite different. Most important for this study, and hitherto unrecognized in the secondary literature, was the phenomenon of religious culture shock that the African newcomers experienced. The Canadian Catholic Church is different from what they had been used to back in their home countries. African newcomers found the local masses solemn and dull, the songs boring; they lacked a sense of belonging in the local Catholic parishes, and some even felt rejected in the Saskatoon churches.

Most shocking for several interviewees was seeing the common Canadian practices of lay ministers administering Holy Communion and girls functioning as altar servers. The mediation of the STM African Mass helps to ameliorate some challenges of religious culture shock. The African Mass supplies what is lacking for African newcomers with respect to worship, for instance, congregational singing of African songs from different parts of Africa, playing African musical instruments, dancing and hand-clapping, African-style intercessory prayers, and priests distributing Communion since there are several at each liturgy.. This way of worship recalls what takes place in Africa, although though the practice at the STM African Mass is enriched through the practice of interculturalization.

The last research question sought suggestions from African Catholic newcomers to address the challenges they faced. The interviewees had some invaluable insights regarding ways of addressing the challenges that they had faced that could facilitate easier adaptation. Their key recommendations included, first and foremost, the need for the presence and availability of church leaders to African newcomers, similar to the outreach of some local Protestant pastors to their flocks (notably, in the Redeemed Church). Second, the Catholic Church should pursue diversity and inclusiveness in worship so newcomers might be given a chance to express their particular cultures in local parishes, rather than only at the STM African Mass. Also the Catholic Church needs to offer more youth activities that can attract and retain young people in the church. The church needs to designate individuals to identify and educate newcomers about Canadian culture. Further, church leaders need to be in the front lines of fighting to eliminate racism and discrimination in the church and in society. In addition, the Africans expressed the need in the Catholic Church for more bible study groups, charismatic renewal, and small faith groups. Just as importantly, the newcomers themselves must learn to follow the ways and laws of

Canada in the awareness that by acting responsibly and honourably, they are ambassadors of their own respective countries.

With respect to the role of religiously appropriate services to newcomers, two modes of religious outreach are exemplified by the (Protestant) Redeemed Church and the STM African Catholic Community. Of course, one common feature of these two groups is that they both have the objective of strengthening their members' faith in an unfamiliar cultural context. However, there are noteworthy differences between the two communities. First, the STM African Mass offers members the opportunity of worshipping as they did back in Africa. It addresses religious culture shock through the integration of African elements into the liturgy. Moreover, the worship is intercultural, integrating elements from several sub-Saharan African cultures with the support of the Canadian Catholic church; in contrast, the Redeemed Christian Church of God is Nigeria-based. Like all other Catholics, African newcomers are obligated to celebrate the liturgy of the holy sacrifice of the Mass every Sunday and even during the week, and so members of the STM African community are required to attend other Catholic churches. In contrast, members of the Redeemed Church can attend Sunday and weekday services and activities at one location. Thus, the STM Africans are encouraged, even required to venture out of the African Catholic community and into the local parishes, whereas the Redeemed Church offers comprehensive religious and non-religious programming, including settlement assistance, that may actually inhibit members from becoming involved in the larger community

6.2 Recommendations

Although it is not usual in an academic thesis to make specific recommendations pursuant to the research, the findings of this study are conducive to such recommendations to various groups such as the Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, the STM African Catholic Community, non-Catholic agencies, non-Catholic churches and policymakers.⁴⁰

6.2.1 Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon/STM African Catholic Mass

⁴⁰ Many of the recommendations made by the interviewees are implementable. For example, Catholic churches can make information about settlement organizations (Catholic and non-Catholic) available to newcomers. This can be done at the parish level by a committee appointed for that purpose. Other suggestions would be more difficult to implement. For instance, Catholic churches in Saskatoon (and elsewhere) could provide opportunities for African cultural elements to be integrated into the regular Sunday mass, so as to embrace the inclusiveness and diversity offered by newcomers. This might not easily be embraced locally because Canadian Catholic churches have their own valued ways of doing things, and there are newcomers from many parts of the world who also would like to practice their cultures in the church. However, these obstacles are not insurmountable from the perspective of intercultural ministry (see Driver, "Welcoming and Belonging").

First, the Catholic churches need to make information about settlement organizations (Catholic and non-Catholic) available to newcomers. This will help them to locate settlement services thus facilitating an easier integration to Canada. Second, the Catholic churches/parishes need to do a better job of outreach to African and other newcomers, making them feel welcome in the local Catholic parishes as members of the universal Church. Third, Catholic Church leaders should make more effort to identify and welcome African and other newcomers. Fourth, the Catholic Churches in Saskatoon should provide opportunities for African (and non-African newcomers') cultural elements (e.g., music, drumming, dancing) to be integrated into the regular Sunday mass, in order to embrace the inclusiveness and diversity provided by newcomers to the church. The Catholic Church, especially in the Diocese of Saskatoon, would benefit from providing and training specialized chaplains on campus and elsewhere to take care of the spiritual and temporal welfare of newcomers, in order to facilitate their transition to new academic, religious and social conditions. It would also be desirable for the Diocese to establish clear lines of communication with non-Catholic settlement agencies (Open Door Society, Global Gathering Place, Newcomer Information Centre, and Saskatchewan Intercultural Association) to alert the church to the arrival of African (and other) Catholic newcomers and vice versa by facilitating contact, with the newcomers' permission.

At the microscopic level, it would be beneficial to offer an orientation for Catholic international students on the University of Saskatchewan campus, perhaps provided by STM. This would help to create a friendly and welcoming atmosphere for the new students, thus making adaption easier.

6.2.2 Policymakers

As noted in Chapter One, census information about the religious backgrounds of Canadian immigrants has not been available since 2001. A recommendation arising out of this study is that Statistics Canada should return to gathering this kind of information, since religion is very important to the adaptation and sense of well-being of some newcomer populations (like the African Catholics of this study). The formulation of effective policies and programs pertaining to newcomer integration may benefit from this kind of information.

6.3 Areas for Further Study

6.3.1 Religious culture shock

This study has identified a phenomenon which is not found in the previous academic literature on culture shock, which I have called “religious culture shock.” This gap in the literature may be due to several factors. One underlying reason might be that previous researchers have not studied avowedly religious communities, like the African Catholic newcomers at STM. Another reason might be that social scientific researchers have overlooked the religious dimensions of newcomer adaptation and thus tended to discount the significance of religion, or to explain religious phenomena in non-religious (e.g., social, economic, psychological) terms. Another possibility is that in studies of culture shock in newcomer populations, interviewees may not feel comfortable discussing personal spiritual issues with academic researchers, unlike this study in which the researcher was a trusted and familiar member of the community.

As explained above, religious culture shock emerged as an important theme in the interviews. Thus, this study has significance not only locally, but to newcomer communities to whom religion is important beyond the STM African Catholic community. In view of the fact that the proliferation of newcomer groups/communities has become the “new normal” due to diaspora, mass migration, refugees, and the impact of globalization, further study is called for as to how religious culture shock affects other immigrant communities as they confront, adjust and adapt to life in Canada and elsewhere.

Another avenue for future research on religious culture shock relates to the experience of indigenous people cut off from their ancestral spiritual practices in their own homelands. For example, in a recent *Globe and Mail* article, Stephanie Nolen reports that the Guarani people of Brazil, due to lost land, lost rituals, chronic disease, unemployment, substance abuse, etc., like some Canadian indigenous populations, are suffering from an epidemic of youth suicides that the interventions of local social workers and psychologists have difficulty addressing.⁴¹ Nolen observes, however, that recently local shamans and healers had intervened by restoring the traditional rituals of spiritual protection in schools and other places where youth gather, and that after three months of rituals, the suicides had stopped. The concept of religious culture shock may be useful in understanding the needs of indigenous communities impacted by colonialism and suffering from spiritual deprivation and alienation.

⁴¹ Stephanie Nolen, “The lost ones: Inside Brazil’s Indigenous suicide crisis”, in *The Globe and Mail’s Latin America*, (Sassoró, Brazil *The Globe and Mail*: Saturday, March. 04, 2017), accessed March 6, 2017, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/canada-indigenous-suicide-crisis-in-brazil/article34199700/>

Clearly, scholars in fields other than religious studies (psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, counsellors, etc.) can benefit from the consideration of religious culture shock as it applies to their fields of study. For example, how does religious culture shock affect the career and academic performance of newcomers, what are its effects on families? This study calls for interdisciplinary collaboration in understanding the impact of religious culture shock on the adaptation of newcomers from many national and religious backgrounds.

6.3.2 African religiosity

The assertion that Africans are “notoriously religious” was clearly supported by the interviewees of this study. They shared enthusiastically how they have been deeply committed to church activities both in their home countries and here in Saskatoon. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis, it would be interesting to see how this generalization applies to other populations of Africans in diaspora. How do religious Africans, at home and in diaspora, assimilate their relatively intense faith when confronted with secularization, science, and technology, not to mention the less enthusiastic religious cultures typical of the western world?

Finally, Yvette G. Flores discusses how migration can lead to culture shock due to changes in meaning systems (social, cultural, geographic).⁴² Of relevance here, she differentiates between hyper-religiosity and appropriate cultural responses in connection to migration.⁴³ A question arising out of this thesis is whether the intense religiosity or super-religiosity that seems natural and desirable to many Africans can become pathological/damaging (hyper-religious) in the process of adapting to a new culture. This suggests the need for further study to determine if hyper-religiosity is a symptom of culture shock in newcomers confronted by religious regimes that seem unsatisfactory and inadequate.

6.3.3 Interculturation

As discussed above, interculturation refers to a process of fusing distinct cultures from different countries of Africa as exemplified by the practice of the STM African Mass. This is distinct from, but related to, the Catholic theology of inculturation, in which a specific African (or other indigenous) culture is fused with Catholicism. Clearly, interculturation benefitted members of the STM African Community. Thus, members of other Catholic and non-Catholic church communities might benefit from the implementation of interculturation, in the pursuit of a

⁴² Ibid., 6.

⁴³ Ibid., 10.

broad and more inclusive Christian faith and practise. Some Protestant churches have implemented something similar, as pointed out by Kevin Driver in his study of an intentionally intercultural church in Banff, Alberta:

We as a church have intentionally chosen what we call an Intercultural approach. We have intentionally embraced each other even though we have a diversity of people with a diversity of prevalence, intensity, and threshold in expressing values, issues, and behaviours. We have discovered that a different approach to ministry is required in a rural, small-town church with its many types of immigrants and nationalities and where there is insufficient numbers for an ethnocentric church.⁴⁴

He adds, “Being intercultural is intentionally embracing our diversities of knowledge and experience-base and acknowledging a willingness for an open-future together. This future together is an ongoing relationship of Hospitable Welcome, reflective of God’s ultimate hospitality. It is choosing to belong to where I am made to feel welcome and made to feel as more than a guest, but as a member of the family.”⁴⁵ He concludes by observing that churches that create a sustained safe space to nurture, share, and appreciate each other by providing opportunities for each member to connect on various social levels can lead to a sense of belonging, acceptance, and welcoming.⁴⁶ This is what the STM African Catholic community does for the benefit of its members.

In sum, further study can be carried out to explore the notion of interculturalisation and its implications for Catholic and non-Catholic theology, since theologians are well situated to articulate and implement a theology of interculturalisation to enable people to understand and practice a more expansive Christian praxis.

Finally, with respect to the STM African Catholic community specifically, it would be interesting to explore the reasons why the women at the STM African Mass do not take on more leadership responsibilities. As noted in Chapter Three, the reason for women’s lack of involvement offered by one of the male leaders was that women simply don’t like taking these responsibilities, and always have some excuse not to. Are there cultural reasons for this, or are the women busy with both outside jobs and domestic duties, so they don’t have the kind of time the men have? Or are they replicating the gendered division of labour back in Africa? Further

⁴⁴ Driver, “Welcoming and Belonging,” 20.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 56.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 93.

research is needed to gain insight into the mechanisms through which gender roles shape the religious responsibilities of African newcomers.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Letter to prospective participants

Researcher: Rosemary Kitavi, Graduate Student, University of Saskatchewan, Graduate Studies and Research (Religion and Culture). Phone Number: 306 203 3192, Email: rmk270@mail.usask.ca

Supervisor: Professor Mary Ann Beavis, St. Thomas More College, phone number. 306 955 5931, email mbeavis@stmcollege.ca

Dear _____,

I am Sister Rosemary Kitavi a member of religious congregation of the Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Nairobi. I am currently a Master's student in the Department of Linguistics and Religious Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. I am conducting a research, which will focus on African Newcomers adaptability to Canadian society, which will help me write my thesis. The title of the thesis is "The Role of the Catholic Church in African Immigrants' Adaptation to Saskatoon: A Case Study of the St. Thomas More African Catholic Community Mass."

It is my pleasure to invite you as a potential participant in this study because you are a member of the STM African Catholic Mass Community. Your knowledge, expertise, stories, views and experience will provide a rich source of information about your adaptation to Saskatoon and Canadian society as a whole. Participation in the study will involve one-on-one interview with me. The questions will be divided into four sections. The interview will last approximately one hour.

I will use a tape recorder to record the interviews, you will be free to say when you want the recording device to be turned off. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time without explanation or penalty of any sort. None of the information provided will be used in the study. Further, you will have the option to use your names or pseudonyms during the interviews.

You will not receive any monetary remuneration' however, you will be appreciated for taking time out of your busy schedule to take part in the study and will be assured that all data you provide will be beneficial to coming up with better ways of helping the African Catholic newcomers to adapt in Saskatoon. The research will have minimal risk, and the benefit of your participation in this project is to help Africans newcomers to adapt easily in Saskatoon.

I will keep the transcribed data secured in my computer at home. Notebooks which will be used to put down what I observe, I will keep them under lock and key in my room at home and will be destroyed when no longer needed. I assure you that any information obtained in this

research that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission. The secured data will be destroyed after five years.

This research project has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Research Ethics Board _____, BEH _____. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Research Ethics Office ethics.office@usask.ca (306) 966-2975. Out of town, participants may call toll free (888) 966-2975.

If you decide and interested to take part in the study, please contact the researcher with the following contact (306) 203 3192 or rmk270@mail.usask.ca.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact me at (306) 203 3192 or rmk270@mail.usask.ca or my supervisor, Dr. Mary Ann Beavis (mbeavis@stmcollege.ca), please ask. Dr. Beavis or I will be happy to answer them. Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Rosemary Kitavi

Appendix 2

Research Questionnaire Guide

Research Topic: The Role of the Catholic Church in African Immigrants' Adaptation to Saskatoon: A Case Study of the St. Thomas More African Catholic Community

Researcher: Rosemary Kitavi

Preamble

The purpose of this research interview is to explore African Roman Catholic immigrants' views, stories, and experiences of adaptation to their life in Canada. As my research focuses on African Roman Catholics in Saskatoon, I am interested in learning about your participation in the STM African Mass.

The questions are divided into 4 sections: background information, settling down in Saskatoon and the role of the church role, importance of STM African Catholic Community Mass, Challenges and implications. The interview will take approximately one hour and you are free to stop your involvement or withdraw your participation at any time without explanation. You are free to pass on any of the questions. All the information you share will be kept confidential. Please feel free to ask for clarification at any time.

Section 1: Tell me about yourself

1. Tell me where you are from?
2. Tell me about the education you received, back home and in Canada?
3. What did you do back home? What do you do now in Saskatoon?
4. Did you come to Canada as an immigrant, refugee, international student, or a temporary skilled worker?
5. Why did you move to Canada? Why did you come to Saskatoon?
6. How long have you been living in Saskatoon? In Canada?
7. Did you have family members or friends in Canada before your arrival? In Saskatoon?
8. Have family members or friends assisted you to settle in Saskatoon?
9. Are you a Roman Catholic? Tell me about your involvement with the Church back home. Were you raised as Roman Catholic?

Section 2: Settling down in Saskatoon and the role of the Church

1. When you arrived to Saskatoon, what agencies helped you to settle down, if any?
2. Have you received any services from catholic agencies? Which ones?
3. Did you benefit from the services of Catholic agencies? If yes, in what ways?
4. Did you benefit from the services of non-Catholic agencies? If yes, in what ways?
5. How would you compare these agencies? Which would you say was more helpful to you, the Catholic or the non-Catholic services?
6. Tell me about some memorable experiences with these agencies.

7. How did you find a place of worship when you arrived in Saskatoon?
8. Was it important for you to worship at a Catholic church? How important?
9. Have you worshipped at any other churches in Saskatoon or elsewhere in Canada? What attracted you to these churches?

Section 3: Importance of the STM African Catholic Mass

1. How often did you attend church services before you came to Saskatoon? What Church/denomination?
2. How often do you attend church in Saskatoon? How often do you attend the STM African Catholic Mass?
3. How did you find out about the STM African Catholic Mass?
4. Would you say that the STM African Catholic Mass is helping/has helped you to settle in Saskatoon? How?
5. What are some of the African elements that are integrated into worship at the STM Mass? Do you find that these are appealing to you as a Roman Catholic newcomer from Africa?
6. Are there aspects in your life that you feel have improved because of your attendance at the STM African Catholic Mass?
7. What would you say is unique or distinctive about the STM African Catholic Mass?
8. Would you describe the people who go the STM African Catholic Mass as a community? If so, in what way?
9. Which are some of the activities that you been involved in as part of your worship at the STM African Mass?

Section 4: Challenges and implications

1. What are the challenges you have faced or continue to face living in and adapting to Saskatoon?
2. What are the challenges you face as you adapt to worship here in Saskatoon?
3. Does the availability of the STM African Catholic Mass help you to deal with these challenges? How?
4. What suggestions would you make to church leaders to help African newcomers overcome their spiritual challenges in Canadian society?
5. What suggestions would you make that could help African newcomers in general (including non-Catholics) to meet the challenges they face in Canadian society for new arrivals?

This is the end of the formal questionnaire. Do you have any questions, or are there any further comments you would like to make?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix 3

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Title of Thesis: The Role of the Catholic Church in African Immigrants' Adaptation to Saskatoon: A Case Study of the St. Thomas More African Catholic Community Mass

Researcher: Rosemary Kitavi, Graduate Student, University of Saskatchewan, Graduate Studies and Research (Religion and Culture). Phone Number: 306 203 3192, Email: rmk270@mail.usask.ca

Supervisor: Professor Mary Ann Beavis, Department of Religion and Culture, St. Thomas More College, 1437 College Drive, Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W6 Canada. Phone Number: (306) 966 8933, mbeavis@stmcollege.ca

I have received an invitation communicating the purpose and process of this study and have been asked to participate in an in-person interview. I understand that purpose of the interview is to enable the completion of a Master's Thesis.

The interviews will focus on the role the Catholic Church plays in the adaptation of African Catholic immigrants to Saskatoon. The questions will be divided into 4 sections: Background information, role of Roman Catholic to African Newcomers, importance of Christian faith to African newcomers, Challenges and Solutions. The interviews will take a minimum of one hour. A digital voice recorder will be used to record the interviews, and the recording device may be turned off any time. I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and I may answer only those questions that I comfortable with.

The study will be minimal risk. However, in the unlikely case of any negative feelings triggered by the interviews, counselling services will be available from STM Campus Ministers Michael MacLean and Gertrude Rompre. Their contact information is:

STM, Michael MacLean, Campus Minister.

1437 College Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 0W6

Telephone: 306 966-8931, email address, mmaclean@stmcollege.ca

STM, Gertrude Rompré, Director of mission and Ministry.

1437 College Drive, Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W6

Telephone: 306 966 8929, email address, grompre@stmcollege.ca

They have consented to serve in this way, if necessary.

The identities of the participants to be interviewed will be kept confidential. Personal information, such as mailing address or telephone numbers of the participants will not be shared with others and will be kept safe by the researcher named in this consent form. Further, any information collected will be kept in the strictest confidence and anonymity. The research supervisor will keep the data obtained for a minimum of 5 years, and if the data are destroyed after 5 years, they will be destroyed beyond recovery. A master list that links participants to their data/responses will be kept during this period, and it will be destroyed at the same time as the other data. Participants may withdraw their data at any time prior to the destruction of these

data. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time prior to the submission of the final draft of the M.A thesis for defense.

Once the data are pooled or de-identified after 5 years it will not be possible to withdraw the data. Further, the participants will have an option to use their names or pseudonyms during the interviews. In regards to the option to use your name or pseudonym, please kindly answer the following:

I wish to remain anonymous: Yes: ____ No: ____

I wish to remain anonymous, but you may refer to me by a pseudonym: Yes: ____ No: ____

The pseudonym I choose for myself is: _____

You may quote me and use my name: Yes: ____ No: ____

I will be provided with an opportunity to review my transcript. This will be done by email if requested.

I will not receive any monetary remuneration' however, I will be appreciated for taking time out of my busy schedule to take part in the study and I will be assured that any and all data I provide will be beneficial to understanding better ways of helping African Catholic newcomers to adapt in Saskatoon.

I will receive feedback on the findings of the study shared by e-mail, after transcribed data have been compiled by April, 2017.

This project has been reviewed and approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Ethics Board_____, BEH_____. I understand that I can find out more about my rights to participate in this study by calling the Office of Research Services at the University of Saskatchewan at (306), 966-2084 or ethics.office@usask.ca

The researcher read and explained this consent form to the participants before receiving the participants' consent, and the participants had knowledge of its content and appeared to understand it. As a participant, I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. A copy of this Consent Form has been given to me for my records. At this time, I consent to be interviewed about the matters described above.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date
_____	_____	
Researcher's Signature	Date	

Appendix 4

Transcript Release Form

Title: **“The Role of the Catholic Church in African Immigrants’ Adaptation to Saskatoon: A Case Study of the St. Thomas More African Catholic Community Mass” (Beh 16-148).**

I, _____, have reviewed the complete transcript of my personal interview in this study, and have been provided with the opportunity to add, alter, and delete information from the transcript as appropriate. I acknowledge that the transcript accurately reflects what I said in my personal interview with Rosemary Kitavi. I hereby authorize the release of this transcript to Rosemary Kitavi to be used in the manner described in the Consent Form. I have received a copy of this Data/Transcript Release Form for my own records.

Name of Participant Date

Signature of Participant Signature of Researcher

Appendix 5

Consent Form for parents

Title: **“The Role of the Catholic Church in African Immigrants’ Adaptation to Saskatoon: A Case Study of the St. Thomas More African Catholic Community Mass” (Beh 16-148).**

I, _____, have been consulted for the use of my child photo for the thesis work with the topic above. I hereby authorize the use of the photo of my child for the study purpose only. I have received a copy of this consent form for my own records.

_____	_____
Name of Parent	Date
_____	_____
Signature of Participant	Signature of Researcher

Appendix 6

1. Aseda nyinaa ye wo dze (Sekyi Baidoo, Ghana) 90 years is no mean achievement. To recount God's blessings, the least we, mortals, could do is to glorify His Name always. "*Aseda nyinaa ye wo dze*" speaks to that. We give all the thanks and praise to Jesus, our solid rock, our fortress, our place of safety, our Lord in whom we trust.

A-se da nyi-naa ye wo dze, Je-sus,

me Bo-ten-tim, Nyame

A-ye-yi nyi-naa ye wo-dze, Je-sus

M'A-ko-kyem nye m'A-ban ke-se nye wo

O-nya-me dza A-yei doo sooo

Wa-dom tsim ho daa nyi-naa

A-se-da nyi-naa ye Wo-dze, Je-sus

Ye-be ka dza A-ye'a ky-re'a man

Je-sus, ye-be-bo Wo din daa daa

M'A-ko-kyem nye m'A-ban ke-se nye Wo

2. Kuwe Baba (Ntokozo Mbambo, South Africa)

This song is one of our beautiful songs in which the lyrics itself are a prayer. Here is a soul presenting itself before God saying "*ngibek' ithemba lami kuwe*" (*I put my trust in You*) and then God responds by saying "*Thula wazi Ndingu Thixo*" (*Be still and know I am The Lord*). This is a post-communion meditation song; reminding us the Lord is always near to answer us when we seek Him.

[2] Kuwe Baba

1. Kuwe Baba Ngibek' i-themba lam (x3)

In Thee o Lord, I place my trust (x3)

2. Thula wazi NdinguThixo (x3)

Be still and know, that I am Lord (x3)

[3] What Shall I Offer

1. What shall I *offer to the Lord* to make Him happy
(*Oh tell me*)

What shall I offer to the Lord to please Him

I may *give Him the best of my clothes, He may not take it*

I may *give Him the best of my shoes, He may not take it*

A loving heart (He'll love),

A patient heart (He'll love),

A humble heart (He'll love),

A caring heart He'll love.

-

2. What shall I *offer to the Lord* to make Him happy
(*Oh tell me*)

What shall I offer to the Lord to please Him

I may *give Him a gift of a ram, He may not take it*

I may *give Him a gift of a cow, He may not take it*

A loving heart (He'll love),

A patient heart (He'll love),

A humble heart (He'll love),

A caring heart He'll love.

3. What shall I *offer to the Lord* to make Him happy
(*Oh tell me*)

What shall I offer to the Lord to please Him

I may *give Him a gift of a car, He may not take it*

I may *give Him a gift of a house, He may not take it*

A loving heart (He'll love),x2

A patient heart (He'll love),x2

A humble heart (He'll love),x2

A caring heart He'll love),x2

3. What shall I offer to the Lord (June Nnam, Nigeria)

Malachi 6:6-8 “With what shall I
come before the Lord and bow
down before the exalted God?”

Burnt offerings, Calves, thousands
of rams, ten thousand rivers of olive
oil, my firstborn ... No, but a loving
and caring heart.